CURRENT ANECDOTES

AND METHODS OF CHURCH WORK.

Copyrighted by CURRENT ANECDOTES CO., 1901.

Vol. II, No. 8. CLEVELAND, MAY, 1901. Cut Gems, Vol. VI, No. 8.

FRESH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM CURRENT LIFE.

BY REV. LOUIS ALBERT BANKS, D. D.

Author of "Fresh Bait for Fishers of Men" "Anecdotes and Morals" etc.

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GOSPEL. 176

Prov. 25: 11; John 15: 3; Col. 3: 16; James 1: 22; John 6: 68.

From Palestine a beautiful Greek copy of the Gospel of St. Matthew was recently sent to the National Library in Paris. It is written in letters of gold on purple parchment and consists of forty-three large quarto pages, which contain about one-third of the Gospel. It is supposed to be the oldest document in existence which is written in gold letters. The lower border of five pages of this document is decorated with miniatures, of which four are specially noteworthy. They represent the following scenes from the New Testament: Herodias and the beheading of John, the miracle of the loaves and fishes, the blind men of Jericho, and the withered fig-tree. The officials of the National Library believe the document was written during the closing years of the reign of Justinian. This is certainly very interesting but there is a more beautiful Gospel than that written on the tablets of every true Christian heart. They are written, not in letters of gold, but in letters of living light, traced by the pencil of divine love. That Gospel will live and be read in heaven long after the one written in golden letters shall have perished with age.

FOOD FOR THE MOTHS. 177

Ps. 49: 14; Matt. 26: 41; Luke 22: 32.

We may marvel at grubs growing fat and succulent upon such unpromising fare as old timber affords, but that achievement is improved upon by the insects that prefer to draw their entire nutrition from woolen fabrics, fur, horsehair, feathers, tanned leather, and the like, and apparently never have any desire to partake of anything of a juicy nature. There are spiritual moths that prey upon Christians out of whom the juice of the spiritual life has evaporated. Let a man or a woman get prayerless and indifferent and the devil's moths find them rich pasturage. No grub ever got fatter on an old oak log than these moths of Satan in honeycombing a Christian out of whom the juice of devotion has gone. It is a very pertinent and solemn question to ask one's self, "Am I in danger of being moth eaten?"

THE FRAGRANCE OF A KIND HEART. 178

Isa. 44: 22; Luke 23: 43; Isa. 43: 1.

A story is now going the rounds concerning the tact and kindness of heart of Queen Victoria. A young American girl who was being presented to the Queen, in making her Court courtesy, committed the error of kissing the Queen. Instantly realizing her blunder, the poor girl nearly fainted, and hurried home in a most distressed state of mind. Next day the American minister was asked by her parents to present her apologies through the proper channels. Simultaneously there reached the legation a note for our minister from Her Majesty's secretary, stating that, comprehending the young American's embarrassment, Queen Victoria sent her an invitation to a state dinner. Needless to say that this kindness not only silenced adverse criticism but gave the American girl an open sesame to the London season. That was a beautiful deed and very Christian. To save another from sorrow and turn their blunders into blessings is Christ-like indeed.

STEALING A TRAP. 179

John 8: 36; Prov. 29: 25; 1 Tim. 6: 9; Isa. 3: 19.

On a certain farm in Connecticut there is kept a fine flock of pigeons. Recently the farmer detected a large chicken hawk making off with one of his pets. He set a trap, and the next day he found the trap gone, and with it four feet of chain with which it had been

fastened. A few days after a large hawk was seen circling round, high up from the ground, and, as he turned and circled something glistened in the sun, just below his body. A week later the big bird was seen to alight in a large tree not far from the house. When the farmer approached the tree the bird did not fly, and it was perceived that he was securely held. As the hawk lit on the tree, a small branch ran through the trap, holding it fast. Thus held he proved an easy victim to the farmer's vengeance. Many a sinner's career is like that of the hawk. A man breaks the law of God and goes into sin because he wants greater freedom, but instead of getting greater freedom in that way he thrusts his feet into a trap, and his sins handicap him at every step.

THE UPWARD STEPS. 180

Ps. 94: 12; Heb. 12: 6-7; Isa. 55: 11; Prov. 28: 13.

None make a greater blunder than those who think they can only climb upward through prosperity and happiness. Upward climbing is always at the cost of trial, and victories won by struggle. Mrs. Farningham, the English poet, makes this very clear in a recent song:

Take the guide's strong hand, and go!
If his name be Sorrow,
Do not fear to climb with him
To a clearer morrow.
He can take thee where the night
Passes to divinest light.

Pain holds out a hand to thee,
Take it, never shrinking;
Lift thy feet and rise with him
Higher than thy thinking.
He who follows Pain's behest
Has at length most perfect rest.

It is God's hand all the time
Urging upward ever;
Oh, be brave through faith and trust,
Rising by endeavor.
Are the steps dark? Yet go on,
Every step is victory won.

God has heard thy prayers. Be glad.
Thou art in His keeping,
Morning songs may sweetest be
After nights of weeping.
Sad one, thou shalt sing again
In the sunshine after rain.

Does the mist bewilder thee?
Climbing make thee weary?
Yet go forward braced by hope,
Confident and cheery.
To thy many guides is given
Power to lead thee up to heaven.

A LIVING TOMB. 181

Rom. 2: 16; Matt. 10: 26; 1 Jno. 3: 15.

Workmen removing a cellar wall under a delapidated building in Vermont not long ago unearthed evidence which solves a murder mystery of seventy years ago. The discovery was made by accident, the laborers having fallen into a pit while trying to lift some heavy stones.

The pit was about eight feet deep, with a stone wall surrounding it. In the centre of the pit was an iron post with a heavy iron chain and a pair of handcuffs attached. Near by was a heap of human bones.

Inquiry disclosed the fact that in 1831 Perry Borden, a young Frenchman, brought his wife to Poultney to live in the house which the workmen are tearing down. Borden became jealous and forbade her visiting a certain tavern near by. One night her husband found her there. She left the place with him and was never seen again. Borden said his wife had deserted him and fled to Canada.

After a year Borden went away and was not heard of again until 1882, when he suddenly reappeared. He said he had been at sea for fifty years. His mind seemed shattered. He went to the little house and remaind two years, neighbors supplying him with provisions. He died in 1887 and was buried in the Potter's Field.

Every one in the community believes Borden chained his wife in the cellar and left her to die a horrible death.

There are many men who do not murder their wives or children, so far as taking the life of the body is concerned, who nevertheless seal them up in a living tomb through their selfishness and unkindness, which represses the natural hopefulness and courage of the heart. One of the saddest things in human life is to note the repressed lives, where every green bough that will run over the wall in gladness is forced back, and given no chance to grow.

CHRIST'S MISSION. 182

Gal. 4: 19; John 15: 4.

Jesus came to earth not only to die for our sins, but to arouse in our hearts everything that was good and holy. He who knew what was in man saw the slumbering qualities that others could not see. As Dr. Hepworth puts it: "He saw that smothered spark in the penitent thief on the cross, and He saw in the Magdalen who tearfully sought His aid. The great central truth in his teaching is the dignity of human nature, the possibilities of the soul when selfishness is rooted out and love is substituted. His mission on earth was to emancipate the divine from its worldly enthralment; to wake up the soul; to tell us that we must live like God's children because we were born members of God's great family. He

opened the very gates of heaven in order to disclose our eternal destiny, knowing that if we properly appreciate ourselves all mean and sordid motives will drop like frost bitten leaves; that when one gets a glimpse of God he must needs become God-like."

WHO IS YOUR NEIGHBOR? 183

Luke 10: 29; Prov. 27: 10; Lev. 19: 10.

Mr. Jacob A. Riis, whom Vice-President Roosevelt has declared to be the most useful citizen in New York city, tells an interesting story concerning his work among the poor in New York. A while ago he went to visit a friend in a suburban town. On the evening of his arrival as they sat at his table the host looked around at his flock of five healthy children and said: "I wish you could find for me in the city some poor family—if possible, a widow with children about the age of these—who would be ours to work and advise with and to help over the rough places when they came along. Then each of mine could have his own friend, and he could get more out of it than he would give, I know. Here they are shut off as you see, from that. And the nighbors are well-to-do." Mr. Riis promised to try, for he knew the man was right. They were sadly handicapped. The best in them was being starved by the ultra-respectability of their surroundings. So one day he found in a tenement-house on the East Side a brave little woman who was making a noble fight to keep her flock together. The oldest boy was about old enough to go into an office, and his face fairly shone with delight at the prospect that he was soon to "help mamma." She was a scrub-woman, she told Mr. Riis, and worked in a public building a couple of miles away, on the West Side of town. Mr. Riis started for his office to telephone to his friend that he had found what he wanted. On the way it struck him that he had forgotten to ask where the widow scrubbed and he went back to find out. "Once or twice," says Mr. Riis, "in my life it has been given to me to see, as it were, the veil rent asunder and the hand of the Almighty working in my sight. This was one of those times. I shall not soon get over the thrill that went through me when I learned that she worked in the Mission Building, at my friend's very door. Just the thickness of it, two inches of wood, separated the two, each in need of the other, and asking vainly, as the years went by 'Where is the neighbor who will give me a hand?' "

THE JEST OF LIFE. 184

Matt. 12: 23; John 13: 35.

A manufacturer of paint who was very enthusiastic over the superior merits of his composition, painted the port bottom of a certain vessel, and on her return from an Eastern voyage, and before she entered the drydock, he invited all the ship owners of the locality to take a trip down the river to a summer resort near the dock, and see for themselves the superior value of such an article as he sold. But when the dock was pumped out the starboard bottom was seen to be almost clean after a four months' voyage, while the port bottom which had been covered with his paint was thickly covered with barnacles and long green grass. Your religion must stand the same test. It must show clean in the life, it must show clean in business, in society, and in politics, or it will have no influence to win others to it.

THE SECRET PRAYER. 185

Ps. 25: 14; 1 Sam. 7: 5; Ps. 119: 99; 1 Thess. 3: 10.

One of the great needs of our time and of all times is for religious meditation, for more quiet communion with God in one's own heart. Christ's command to go alone and shut the door upon the outward life, has in it the secret of rich blessings. Some poet whose name is unknown to me puts strong emphasis on it in this little song:

Lord, I have shut my door—
Shut out life's busy cares and fretting noise,
Here in this silence, they intrude no more,
Speak thou, and heavenly joys
Shall fill my heart with music, sweet and calm—
A holy psalm.

Yes, I have shut my door,
Even on all the beauty of thine earth—
To its blue ceiling, from its emerald floor,
Filled with spring's bloom and mirth;
From these, thy works, I turn, Thyself I seek,
To Thee, I speak.

Lord, I have shut my door!
Come Thou and visit me: I am alone!
Come, as when doors were shut, Thou cam'st of yore
And visitest Thine own.
My Lord, I kneel with reverent love and fear,
For Thou art here.

THE PUBLIC CONSCIENCE. 186

Matt. 22: 21; Rom. 13: 1; 2 Pet. 2: 10.

President Hadley of Yale College, in his recent address before the University of California, said some very interesting things concerning the power of public opinion. This plea for public spirit among young men is worthy of being repeated in every pulpit in the land.

"The possibility of maintaining democracy is due to the fact that increased readiness to accept self-imposed burdens has gone hand in hand with increase of commercial and political power. It is for the young men who are just growing up to carry into the larger worlds

of business and legislation the spirit which will subordinate personal convenience to collective honor. In this development of the principle of political trusteeship lies the hope of the republic for its future."

A CROWN AT THE PAWN SHOP. 187

2 Tim. 4: 8; Rom. 8: 15.

The Press dispatches have recently told the story, that King Carlos of Portugal, during his stay in London in connection with the funeral of Queen Victoria, received a loan from the King of England, and other members of the royal family, to enable him to take out of pawn the crown jewels of Portugal which were pledged for four million dollars. Of these crown jewels, the most important was the crown, which is the most valuable from a money standpoint of any crown in the world. The precious stones with which the crown is set being estimated at the immense sum of six million dollars. The crown and other crown jewels have been in pawn in London for many years. It seems strange for a king to put his crown in pawn, but after all there are plenty of Americans who are doing the same thing. Every man who yields to sin has pawned the crown of his manhood. There is no more earnest Scriptural appeal than which says, "Hold fast that thou hast that no man take thy crown."

THE NEED OF PATIENCE. 188

Luke 8: 15; Rom. 5: 3; Ps. 37: 34; Isa. 40: 31.

Dr. Theodore Cuyler in a recent article calls attention to the fact that the Bible puts a great premium on plodding. "Be not weary in well doing." "Ye have need of patience." "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise," "Let patience have her perfect work." There is need in these days for these sober counsels, for we live amid an atmosphere of rush and hurry. Speed is more esteemed than safety, and the very word "slow" is often a term of reproach. This rage for rapid money getting, rapid social advancement, and fast living is very demoralizing. People will sit up till midnight at a concert or a play or a party, but an instructive Gospel discourse must be cut down to the minute! Religion catches too often this prevailing fervor. There is an unwholesome demand for pulpit sensations, hasty methods, superficial church joinings, which end in a half way, halting, and feeble piety.

THE RECKLESSNESS OF SIN. 189

Matt. 7: 13; 2 Pet. 2: 11.

In New Jersey recently a horse raced for seven miles on the railroad track in front of a train. The horse was evidently mad and the train never caught up to him. On coming to a junction he raced down another track and dashed head foremost into the locomotive of an express train, and was destroyed. Sin gives to men and women a madness like that. It is the commonplace of every day to see men and women dashing headlong into sin that can only mean the loss of everything worth having Surely sin is a madness!

THE PATH THROUGH THE VALLEY. 190

Rom. 8: 35; John 11: 25; I John 5: 12.

Ada Melville Shaw writes a beautiful poem, showing the compensations of the life that does not reach the mountain top, or the high upland of success. Every life must have some experience that might be comforted by this song:

I followed the path through the valley;
The sumachs blazed red at my side,
The oaks wore a mantle of crimson,
The maples in glory were dyed,
Brown acorns dropped down from the branches,
In earnest of forests to be,
A cricket chirped clear from its hiding,
The katydids could not agree.

I followed the path through the valley;
The bright leaves lay thick at my feet,
Pale meadow-rue long had been waiting,
And golden rod's reign was complete;
Soft silk from the milkweed was bursting,
Wild nest-cries were hushed for the year;
A squirrel was busily hiding
His nut-store for winter's good cheer.

I followed the path through the valley;
How holy the hush of the glade!
What balm in the breath of the autumn!
What portent in seed-pod and blade!
I followed the path through the valley,
I stood by the shore of the sea;
The voice of those wide-rolling waters
Came fraught with a message for me.

Life's path leads me down through the valley;
Love's promises brighten my way,
The harvest of hope grows to fullness,
Sweet peace crowns the close of the day;
The path leads me onward and outward,
It leads to the fathomless sea
That fear has called "death," but those waters
Mean life more abundant for me!

Friend, fear not the way of the valley,
Shrink not from the fullness of time;
God's promise made lovely thy morning,
At evening that promise shall shine.
What though thy path leads to the waters?
Their stormiest billows but prove
The height and the depth and the wonder
Of God's inexhaustible love.

CHRIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARD CHILDREN. 191

Matt. 28: 10; Mal. 4: 6; Luke 1: 17.

The editor of the New York Journal, in a strong article on the attitude of Jesus toward children, declares that it was Jesus who gave to the child his place in the world's society. With all the power of divine authority he built around the feeblest among us a wall that has protected them through the ages. Before His day the child existed only by sufferance. It had no rights. It was but a counter, an infinitesimal atom. It was considered simply the property of the parent. Its father had power of life and death over it. The homeless dog that roams the streets today is more effectively shielded from cruelty than was the friendless child before Jesus came to live, and to die, for the weak and poor. The law has said: "The parent is ruler of the child, and may dispose of it as he sees fit." But Jesus said—and these are the most beautiful and affecting words in all the moral law of the world: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." Matthew, xviii, 10.

THE CHILD WITNESSES BEFORE THE THRONE. 192

Matt. 28: 6.

The editor of the New York Journal has set forth with tremendous realism Christ's teaching concerning God's love for the children, and the power of that teaching over human life for more than eighteen hundred years. He calls attention to the fact that Jesus made no threats so terrifying as those aimed at men who should harm little children. "It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." Matthew, xviii, 6. It is impossible now to conceive the horrid indifference to childhood's rights which preceded the birth of Christianity. Infanticide was not the exception, but a settled custom. So much so, that in Rome the "exposure" of children in desert places was almost a virtue, since it gave the child some slight chance of surviving. Not a few, but thousands and tens of thousands of children were thus "exposed." They fell a prey to wild beasts, still more ferocious, who took the children to make slaves or criminals of them. Jesus came, and a miracle was worked—a miracle that no man will deny. This was the miracle: Jesus said, "For I say unto you, their angels behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." Jesus spoke, and thousands of millions of men, through nineteen centuries have believed and obeyed the command. Every man was warned that the child dying goes straightway into the presence of God, and there, looking upon His face, bears witness of the treatment meted out to him here. Well might it be said of the man who mistreated such a child: "It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

THE NEED OF WORSHIP. 193

John 12: 32; Job 11: 7; Jer. 6: 16.

The Rev. Dr. Schulman, in a recent magazine article, has set forth clearly the fact that at his best man longs to worship some power above him. And it is this capacity for worship which is the measure of man's self-culture and the test of his character. It is the touchstone by which to test the ideal nature of the individual and the trend of a whole civilization. A man may be a source of beneficence, he may be a reservoir of practical social effort; he may through the power which he possesses, and therefore the influence which he wields, make himself the object of universal acclaim. And yet there is something intensely distorted in his character if he feels not by some impulse of humility the desire to worship the Maker, whose creation he is. For otherwise the deepest fact in his experience is not a sense of responsibility to a higher authority, but rather a complacent self-reliance and self-sufficiency. In every act of worship, however crude and mistaken, there was some liberating influence, through which man was led away from his egoism, and experienced the restraint to his power and the quickening inspiration to his stirring virtue. And today it is the same ability to acknowledge the existence of an Infinite Perfect—beside whom our brightest virtues pale, and to whom we stretch out our hands in reverence and worship—that is the salt that protects the health of the soul and gives to life an unfailing, because a never completely realized, purpose.

A MAN BLEST BY BLESSING HIS NEIGHBORS. 194

Eccl. 11: 1; 2 Sam. 6: 11; Ps. 33: 12.

A recent writer in the Review of Reviews declares that it is not fortresses or naval stations or commercial relations that are chiefly important to us as regards Cuba, but something wholly different. Through our entire life time as a nation we have been sorely plagued and incalculably harmed by epidemic diseases that have visited us from the West India ports, and particularly from Havana. In times past we have thus imported smallpox, typhus, cholera, and, worst and most frequently, yellow fever. Since the American occupation of Cuba we have been doing all we could to improve sanitary conditions there for the good of the Cubans, and also for our own benefit. We are making some wonderful demonstrations as to the way in which yellow fever is propagated, with the prospect that we may in a few years stamp it out altogether. What a striking illustration this is of the great truth that no man lives for himself. We cannot be indifferent about the condition of our neighbor without suffering for it, and it is impossible for us to bless our neighbor by helping him to be good and happy without receiving some blessings in return. The unselfish life is after all the best bargain, as well as the true principle.

THE BRAVE AT HOME. 195

Prov. 16: 32; John 16: 22.

It is ofttimes a braver heart that stays at home, who carries the prosaic burdens of every day in all the quiet round of domestic life, than the one who goes forth to the music of drums in all the glory of war. Some poet elaborates this thought:

The maid who binds her warrior's sash
With smile that well the pain dissembles,
The while beneath her drooping lash
One starry teardrop hangs and trembles,
Though heaven alone records the tear,
And fame shall never know her story,
Her heart has shed a drop as dear
As e'er bedewed the field of glory!

The wife who girds her husband's sword,
'Mid little ones who weep or wonder,
And bravely speaks the cheering word,
What though her heart be rent assunder;
Doomed nightly in her dreams to hear
The bolts of death around him rattle,
Has shed as sacred blood as e'er
Was poured upon the field of battle!

The mother who conceals her grief,
While to her breast her son she presses,
Then breathes a few brave words and brief,
Kissing the patriot brow she blesses,
With no one but her secret God
To know the pain that weighs upon her,
Sheds holy blood as e'er the sod
Received on freedom's field of honor.

THE SPRING HOME-SICKNESS. 196

Ps. 56: 6; Eccl. 12: 5; 2 Cor. 5: 6.

An old Texan looked out of the window of his Broadway office in New York city and eyed the trees in Trinity church-yard wistfully and said: "It's this soft hinting weather that has crept into me. That's nature. Why, the very cattle on the range get restless, on such days, and break away. If the boys miss any of the herd, in the early spring, they don't fool around, wondering where the brutes have gone. They know that the place to find them is on the range where they were born. I've known steers to go across country, straight as a die, through all kinds of obstacles, back to their old range. Horses will do the same thing. I've had wild mustangs break away in the night and make tracks for the place where they were foaled. A man is only a higher order of brute, and he keeps a good many instincts, though he doesn't always recognize them. I'm homesick for Texas, but I'm homesick for something further back than that. I've been sitting here at my desk, and, every little while, without any reason or warning, I would find a shallow pebbly stream running across my ledger and shutting out the figures, while there by the inkstand a dirty little chap would lie on the bank, fishing with an old hickory rod. I don't believe I ever caught a fish in that creek, but I was a tremendous optimist. Home-sick weather I call it." This suggests to me that diviner home-sickness of the soul which I see sometimes in aged Christians, most of whose loved ones have crossed the river to the heavenly shore. They seem to feel the breezes of heaven on their cheeks, and have a home-sick lonely feeling, a longing to greet their dear ones whom it may be they bade goodbye half a century ago. I was talking not long since with an old man who was nearly ninety, and his voice grew strangely gentle, and his eyes filled with tears as he talked with the sweetest and loving reminiscence of his first-born son, who went away from him when he was only seven years old, and who had been waiting in heaven for sixty years. The old gray-haired saint was as home-sick for him as though it were only yesterday that he had bade him goodbye.

NO ONE CAN FILL THE MOTHER'S PLACE. 197

Luke 1: 43; Matt. 12: 47; John 19: 25.

Dr. Felix Adler exploded a bombshell not long ago at the Women's Conference of the Society for Ethical Culture at its meeting in New York City. In the course of his address upon "The New Education," he arraigned parents and the modern home for the neglect of the proper education of children. "What looms up of most conspicuous importance in the average home," asserted Dr. Adler, "are the luxuries of life and the delicacies of fare. Luxury in the home is poison to the child in that home. Mothers who have young children, and mothers should have young children, the greater part of their lives, should not spend all their time gormandizing and gowning and in going to matinees. They should be taught that education is one of the greatest of the grand things of life."

A SUN THAT NEVER CHANGES. 198

Heb. 13: 8; John 12: 34; John 1: 1-6.

Sir Robert Ball, the eminent English scientist, says that the sun is shrinking. It is a well-known fact, he explains, that most things in cooling become smaller; a poker, for example, is shorter when it is cold than when it is hot. The sun, too, must obey this fundamental law, and must therefore be getting smaller. If we could measure its diameter on two successive days we should find that it had decreased by nine inches; that is to say, it is shrinking at the rate of about five feet a week, or a mile in every twenty years. But thank God the Sun of Righteousness is not shrinking. Jesus Christ who is our Sun, is the

same yesterday, today and forever. No eclipse will ever come over his glory and his power to warm the heart and save the soul is as great today as ever.

THE ART OF DOING THE THINGS WE DO NOT LIKE TO DO GRACEFULLY.

Matt. 11: 29; Isa. 50: 7; Ex. 18: 22. 199

Sir Edward Malet recently said of Abraham Lincoln that of all the great men he had ever known Lincoln was the one who had left upon him the strongest impression as being a sterling son of God. Straightforward, unflinching, not loving the work he had to do, but facing it with a bold and true heart; mild whenever he had the chance; stern as iron when the public weel required it, following a beeline to the goal which duty set before him. The test of life is not when we are doing the things we like to do. It does not require much pluck to keep good humored and patient when all our surroundings are congenial. But the true test of Christian manhood and womanhood is when we are compelled to face labor that is uncongenial to us, and duties from which everything in us shrinks. To take up these uncomfortable burdens and go forward with a bold and patient face is the highest grace of the Christian character.

"THE BIVOUAC OF THE DEAD." 200

John 5: 25; Rev. 14: 15; Heb. 11: 13.

As the Decoration Day occasion draws nigh again, it is interesting to note the story of the most famous martial eulogy that the world has ever known. It was written by Theodore O'Hara; a Southern soldier who was on the staff of Major-General Breckinridge in the Confederate Army during the Civil War. The poem was written in 1847. O'Hara died and was buried at Frankfort, Kentucky, in June, 1867. The poem is long, but it is so perfect and so seldom quoted in full, that I furnish here a complete copy of it:

The muffled drum's sad roll has beat
The soldier's last tattoo;
No more on life's parade shall meet
That brave and fallen few
On fame's eternal camping ground
Their silent tents are spread,
And glory guards, with solemn round,
The bivouac of the dead.

No rumor of the foe's advance,
Now swells upon the wind;
No troubled thoughts at midnight haunts
Of loved ones left behind;
No vision of the morrow's strife
The warrior's dream alarms;
No braying horn nor screaming fife
At dawn shall call to arms.

Their shivered swords are red with rust,
Their plumed heads are bowed;
Their haughty banner, trailed in dust,
Is now their martial shroud,
And plenteous funeral tears have washed
The red stains from each brow,
And the proud forms, by battle gashed,
Are free from anguish now.

The neighing troop, the flashing blade,
The bugle's stirring blast·
The charge, the dreadful cannonade,
The din and shout, are passed;
Nor war's wild note nor glory's peal
Shall thrill with fierce delight
Those breasts that nevermore may feel
The rapture of the fight.

Like the fierce northern hurricane
That sweeps his great plateau,
Flushed with the triumph yet to gain,
Came down the serried foe,
Who heard the thunder of the fray
Break o'er the field beneath,
Knew well the watchword of that day
Was "victory or death."

Long had the doubtful conflict raged
O'er all the stricken plain,
For never fiercer fight had waged
The vengeful blood of Spain;
And still the storm of battle blew,
Still swelled the gory tide;
Not long our stout old chieftain knew
Such odds his strength could bide.

'Twas in that hour his stern command
Called to a martyr's grave
The flower of his beloved land,
The nation's flag to save.
By rivers of their fathers' gore
His first-born laurels grew,
And well he deemed the sons would pour
Their lives for glory, too.

Full many a norther's breath has swept
O'er Angostura's plain—
And long the pitying sky has wept
Above its mouldering slain.
The raven's scream or eagle's flight,
Or shepherd's pensive lay
Alone awakes each sullen height
That frowned o'er that dread fray.

Sons of the dark and bloody ground,
Ye must not slumber there,
Where stranger steps and tongues resound
Along the heedless air.
Your own proud land's heroic soil
Shall be your fitter grave;
She claims from war his richest spoil—
The ashes of her brave.

Thus 'neath their parent turf they rest,
Far from the gory field,
Borne to a Spartan mother's breast
On many a bloody shield;
The sunshine of their native sky
Smiles sadly on them here,
And kindred eyes and hearts watch by
The heroes' sepulchre.

Rest on, embalmed and sainted dead!
Dear as the blood ye gave;
No impious footsteps here shall tread
The herbage of your grave;
Nor shall your glory be forgot
While fame her record keeps,
Or honor paints the hallowed spot
Where valor proudly sleeps.

Yon marble minstrel's voiceless stone
In deathless song shall tell,
When many a vanished age hath flown,
The story how ye fell.
Nor wreck, nor change, nor winter's blight,
Nor time's remorseless doom,
Shall dim one ray of glory's light
That gilds your deathless tomb.

UNUSUAL.

Charles Frederick Goss, author of the Redemption of David Carson, told the two following stories recently:

A young man with an impediment in his speech went to a stammerer's institute and asked for a course of treatment. The professor with an eye on the main chance, asked him if he wanted a full or a partial course.

"A p-p-par-t-t-ial course," was the reply.

"How much of a partial course?"

(Readers may supply the stuttering, we are short of dashes, but this was his reply:)

"I want enough of a partial course so that when I go to the florist's and ask for a c-c-c-chrys-s-s-an-the- (whistle here) mum, that the blamed thing won't wilt before he finds out what I want."

This has been used as a spur to desultory committees. Their scheme wilts before people find out about it. (446)

The other illustrates the position of a man between two dilemmas:

Two friends were walking across a field, when they attracted the attention of a bull, which started in pursuit. There was a tree not far off and both started for it, each trying to reach the tree first, as it was small and would only accommodate one, the successful brother shinned up as far as he could and looked down to see what would happen. The one behind being hard pressed, saw to one side a little depression and realizing that any port in a storm was welcome and made for it. On reaching he found it was a mouth of a cave, and jumped in just as the animal was about to toss him. The friend up the tree could not see the entrance to the cave, but conjectured that there must be one, and was thankful for his comrade's escape. The bull had no more than passed the mouth of the cave than out popped the man, and the bull, wheeling, charged him again. This was repeated several times, when the man up the tree cried out in astonishment: "Why don't you stay in the cave, you fool; you'll keep that bull around here all day and we'll never get out." The sentence was hardly finished when the active man had to jump in to escape the bull, but when he came out he wrathfully shook his fist and said: "You are a bigger fool than I am. There is a bear in the cave." (447)

This reminds me of one of Sam Jones' stories. Two colored brethren were walking along the road discussing faith and works. Mr. Johnsing was strong on faith and Mr. Thomson pinned his faith to works. "I jes believe," says Johnsing, "on lying down on the promises and jes trusting in de Lord, until he done brung it to pass." "I believe in de promises, just same as you do, but laws, I additionally b'lieve dat a man should jes do all he can ter bring dem promises around himself. Suppose my boy Jim says, 'I want a drink.' I say what for you botherin' me about it. Go to de spring and get—Say, what's dat dust in the road? Dat am Mistah Carter's bull!"

Mr. Johnsing went over one fence and Mr. Thomson over the other fence, leaving the animal a clear road. After walking some distance in the fields they came together and Mr. Thomson cried out in derision:

"Eh, oh my! Did I see Brother Johnsing lying down on dem promises?—a restin' on dem promises when de bull came down de road? Eh, eh, oh no!"

"Hol' on dar, hol' on dar, doan you go circumventin' me and a-jeerin' me. I jes want to tell you mighty plain dat when de Lord made dem promises, dar warn't no such animals aroun'. No sah! Dat animal was a contingency, sah." (448)

That reminds me of another colored story. The porter at an Arkansas railroad eating house began to ring a large gong when the train stopped. The porter had heard some forcible expressions as to the quality of the food from those who had eaten on previous occasions. He kept on ringing, and as you know, a gong is worse than a church bell, it set a dog howling, and this gong was working with telling effect on a lean, lank hound standing on the platform. The porter stopped long enough to say, "What you howling for, dawg, you don't have to eat here." (449)

"Judge not lest ye be judged," and several of the proverbs on silence is golden, etc., is illustrated by the following:

In Cincinnati it seems that many of the flats and apartment houses are served by hucksters who cry out their goods and orders are often given by persons from a window. "Wood, wood!" was the cry one day, and from one of his customers came the order, "Put in a load." He drove to the rear and unloaded. This done, he went up to collect, and was told that no wood was ordered. He protested and the woman, who had several similar experiences within a short time, went to the cage and grabbing the proficient parrot by the

neck, threw it out the back window. It gathered itself up and went limping around the back yard, finally flying upon the alley fence, on the other side of which was a dead cat. Surveying the cat sympathetically, it croaked out, "How many loads you order?" (450)

Chauncey Depew told this story on Gen. O. O. Howard: "When Howard was in command of the army of the Tennessee he got everybody converted by his preaching and influence. That is, all except the mule drivers. They hung out and he didn't seem to be able to go deep enough for them. But one day a delegation of drivers came to his tent, and when the orderly admitted them the spokesman said: 'Well, general, we have decided to make safe on this gospel offer you have been makin'. We want to be Christians; we don't want to stand out against the whole army.' General Howard was delighted and gave them a few words of advice, and was ushering them out, when the spokesman suddenly remembered something. 'I say, General, I most forgot; who you going to get to drive the mules?" (451)

THE LAST HYMN.—Marianne Farningham.

The Sabbath Day was ending in a village by the sea,
The uttered benediction touched the people tenderly,
And they rose to face the sunset in the glowing, lighted west,
And then hastened to their dwellings for God's blessed boon of rest.

But they looked across the waters, and a storm was raging there;
A fierce spirit moved above them—the wild spirit of the air—
And it lashed, and shook, and tore them till they thundered, groaned and boomed,
And alas! for any vessel in their yawning gulfs entombed.

Very anxious were the people on that rocky coast of Wales,
Lest the dawns of coming morrows should be telling awful tales,
When the sea had spent its passion and should cast upon the shore,
Bits of wreck, and swollen victims, as it had done oft before.

With the rough winds blowing round her a brave woman strained her eyes
As she saw along the billows a large vessel fall and rise.
Oh! it did not need a prophet to tell what the end must be,
For no ship could ride in safety near that shore on such a sea.

Then the pitying people hurried from their homes and thronged the beach.
Oh, for power to cross the waters and the perishing to reach!
Helpless hands were wrung in terror, tender hearts grew cold with dread,
And the ship urged by the tempest to the fatal-rock shore sped.

"She has parted in the middle! Oh, the half of her goes down!
God have mercy! Is His heaven far to seek for those who drown?"
Lo! when next the white, shocked faces looked with terror on the sea,
Only one last clinging figure on a spar was seen to be.

Nearer to the trembling watchers came the wreck tossed by the wave,
And the man still clung and floated, though no power on earth could save.
"Could we send him a short message? Here's a trumpet, shout away!"
'Twas the preacher's hand that took it, and he wondered what to say.

Any memory of his sermon? Firstly? Secondly? Ah, no.
There was but one thing to utter in that awful hour of woe.
So he shouted through the trumpet, "Look to Jesus! Can you hear?"
And "Aye, aye, sir!" rang the answer o'er the waters loud and clear.

Then they listened. "He is singing 'Jesus, lover of my soul,'"
And the winds brought back the echo, "While the nearer waters roll."
Strange indeed it was to hear him, "Till the storm of life is past,"
Singing bravely o'er the waters, "Oh, receive my soul at last."

He could have no other refuge, "Hangs my helpless soul on thee."
"Leave, oh leave me not"—the singer dropped at last into the sea.
And the watchers looking homeward, through their eyes by tears made dim,
Said, "He passed to be with Jesus in the singing of that hymn."

Note.—If a male voice will softly sing "Jesus, lover of my soul," while the pastor is reading the last two verses, the singer stopping abruptly at "Leave me not," the effect will be doubled. This should have been included in the "Praise Service." See page 303, April number of Current Anecdotes.

HOMILETIC DEPARTMENT.

Conducted by REV. JAMES M. GRAY, D. D.

Author of "Synthetic Bible Studies."

I.

THE VALUE OF EXPOSITORY PREACHING.

I should like to supplement what has been said previously on the history of expository preaching, by some remarks on the value and importance of it.

1. In the first place, when the art is learned, it is the easiest form of preaching; and this is saying a good deal in an era of the conservation of energy. The other day my attention was called to an announcement of a series of Sunday evening discourses by a city pastor, on "The Gospel in Recent Fiction," in the course of which he proposed to speak of the spiritual and ethical teaching of some half-dozen of the popular novels of the day. I could not but think if he had put the same time and interest into the reading and analysis of as many books of the Bible, he would have worked less and accomplished more. It might be said he would not get as many people to hear him, but I doubt the truth of that statement, if it were known what he was going to do, and if he did it well. Moreover, there is another side to the question. The Watchman says: "Time and again we have seen Sunday congregations increased greatly under the stimulus of what is called 'up-to-date' preaching, but the church as a spiritual body, effective for achieving the true ends of a church, became progressively weaker. The outsiders said that it was doing a tremendous work, but really it was not doing anything like the work it did in the days of its comparative obscurity."

2. It is not only the easiest but the most appropriate form of preaching. i. e., it assumes and compels on the part of the preacher a large knowledge of the Word of God and aptness in imparting it. "Where no extended exposition is attempted," says another, "the preacher is naturally induced to draw upon systematic treatises, philosophical theories, works of mere literature, or his own ingenuity of invention and fertility of imagination; with the result that the rhetorical aspect of preaching attracts undue attention, and the desire to be original, striking, ingenious and elegant supersedes the earnest endeavor to be biblical." There are few ministers, honest with their own souls, who will not admit the truth and the seriousness of this implication. Here too is how heresy comes to raise its head and grow apace. The biblical preacher is always orthodox and evangelical, and has no trouble in remaining so.

And this is the same with his congregation, for here we have a rule that works both ways. A biblical preacher comes, in time, to make a biblical church, and should that not be the aim of every minister? Should not his example be that of Paul, "teaching every man in all wisdom, that he may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." The truth, however, is, as the authority quoted above says, that "the Scriptural knowledge possessed by our ordinary congregations, amidst all our boasted light and improvement, bears no comparison with that of the Scottish peasantry of the last generation, who, from very infancy, were taught to follow the preacher, in their little Bibles, as he expounded in regular course." Why hear we so much in these days of Bible Training Schools and Bible Conventions, and Union Bible Classes and the like? They are good signs of the times, and bad signs. They demonstrate a hunger on the part of some of the people of God for His Word, and an inability to have it satisfied in the place where they naturally belong. Every church should be more or less truly a Bible Training School, and the pastor the head of it.

3. It is the most useful form of preaching. Dr. Alexander has some excellent observations that fit in under this head, every one of which I have experienced to be true in my own ministry, and earnestly recommend to the prayerful consideration of my brethren.

For example, expository preaching affords inducement and occasion to the preacher to declare the whole counsel of God. It keeps him from neglecting many important doctrines and duties which otherwise would almost necessarily be overlooked. It gives a symmetry and completeness to his pulpit efforts. It promotes variety and enables him to escape ruts. To how many people are such biblical truths as predestination and election unwelcome? Yet, how important they are, how necessary to be discussed and explained by the minister of the gospel, and how likely to be avoided nevertheless? But let him be expounding Romans, and he must deal with those difficulties, and glorify God in the doing of it. I say glorify God, for the reason that those doctrines, and some others, are abhorrent to the popular mind, is chiefly because they are usually set forth in their "naked theological form," and not in their scriptural connection.

And then, too, there are certain sins which every pastor feels he ought to inveigh against once in a while, but from which he is prevented either from delicacy, or through fear of being considered personal in his remarks. Let him adopt the expository method of preaching occasionally, however, and his hesitation in these respects will be removed as he comes across the very themes that should thus be touched upon, in a natural way.

4. It may become the most popular form of preaching. Indeed it should become so. The fault is ours, i. e., the minister's, if such is not the case. We should keep at it till we learn to do it well. We should besiege the throne of grace for power and wisdom to do it well. Who doubts that the Author of the Holy Scriptures would answer such entreaties. Chalmers' lectures on Romans, Archbishop Leighton's lectures on First Peter, F. W. Robertson's on First Corinthians, are old, but standard types of what

may be done in this respect. I doubt not that Archbishop Trench delivered the substance of his book on the "Epistles to the Seven Churches" to his congregation before it appeared in print; and so in the case of Bishop Ryle and his "Expository Thoughts on the Gospels," and Dr. Moule and his "Studies in Philippians." I, myself, have seen large congregations held from week to week in city churches, where the chief attraction was the exposition of the Bible text. God wrote the Bible for the "common people," and it is irreverent to suppose that they can not be interested in the reading and explanation of it. There is no other book in the world which sells like God's Book; it leads the market! How short-sighted, then, are we ministers who fail to take advantage of the fact, and utilize it to draw our audiences, and interest them, and nourish them with the bread of life!

Perhaps later on something shall be said about the reading of the Bible which may aid young ministers in the matter of expounding it.

* * * *

The following from the pen of Pastor F. E. Marsh, of England, which I have just seen, is so good an illustration of a certain kind of expository preaching, that I am glad to be able to set it before my readers:

What kind of persons are those who are born again? We have only to turn to the first epistle of John for the answer. Please mark the words "born of Him," or "born of God," which we have again and again in the first epistle of John. We get seven characteristics of those who are begotten of God: (1) The people who are born of God are righteous. "Every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him" (ii. 29). If I am not doing righteously, what evidence have I that I am born of Him? (2) Those born of God are an unsinning people. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin" (ii. 9). Sin is not the habit of life of the one who has been born again. The trend of his life is not in the old paths of sin. (3) Those who are born of God are an abiding people. "His seed abideth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (iii. 9). (4) Those who are born of God are a loving people. "Every one that loveth is born of God" (iv. 7). (5) They are a believing people. "He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God" (v. 1). It is not merely that they say that Christ is Christ, but they know Him experimentally as the Christ in power. (6) Those who are born of God are an overcoming people. "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world" (v. 4). The evidence, therefore, of being born of God is victory over the world. (7) Those born of God are a preserved people. "Whosoever is born of God sinneth not, but He that was begotten of God keepeth him" (v. 18, R. V.) Those who have been born of God are kept by the power of God. These are the people who constitute the Church of God, and I say they answer to everything that is said of those who are found faithful, and who escape the things that are coming in the future.

II.

SERMONIC HINTS FOR WHITSUNTIDE.

Whitsunday comes this year on May 26. The word is an abbreviation of "White Sunday," so-called from the albs or white robes worn in the early church by the candidates for baptism on that day. It is the seventh Sunday after Easter, on which that portion of the church which observes the ecclesiastical year, commemorates the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. It is a propitious time for those preachers who may feel that they have neglected the doctrine of the Holy Spirit to present some aspect of it to their congregations. It might be well if a series of sermons were planned for Whitsuntide which includes more than the one Sunday.

* * * *

Neglecting the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit.—The following interesting and suggestive paragraph is from the correspondence of The Watchman, January, 1897:

"Our theological literature is a very good index to the themes which are considered of the greatest importance among the thoughtful leaders of our Christian communions. An examination of the most important theological Quarterlies and Reviews gives us the following results: The Bibliotheca Sacra began publication in 1844. From that date, straight on to, and including 1889—forty-six volumes, containing at least 1,300 articles, by more than 300 contributors—there is not a single article upon the person or work of the Holy Spirit. Since 1889, since it has been published at Oberlin, three articles have appeared. The Methodist Quarterly, for over forty years from 1839, contained only one contribution on this theme, an article upon the sin against the Holy Ghost. In 1887 this magazine became the Methodist Review, and under this name is silent upon this topic. The Princeton Review, in its fifty-six volumes from 1838 to 1894, contains only one article upon this matter, and that upon blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. The publication of a Baptist Quarterly has been intermittent. Eleven volumes catalogued in Poole's Index give us three articles; the last, upon "The Holy Spirit, the Need of the Church," being the only article of practical import among them all. The Andover Review is silent upon this subject. Has the interest upon this theme been reserved for books? Ask your publisher for a book by an American author in which this matter of the Holy Spirit's mission has been treated in a broad, comprehensive and catholic manner, and see what answer he will give you!

"Change your point of view now to the inner circles of our religious life. Listen to the confusion of tongues on this subject of the Spirit's work in the prayer-meetings and conventions. Hear the prayers that the Spirit may be 'poured out,' that the Church may receive a new 'baptism of the Spirit.' Hear the vague talk about the Spirit as an 'influence.' Hear how the work of the exalted Christ is confused with the work of the abiding Spirit."

Books on the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit. —Since the above correspondence was penned there has come about a great revival of interest in the teaching of the Scriptures concerning the Third Person of the Godhead. Books on the subject have greatly multiplied, a few of which are mentioned herewith. One of the fullest and richest books, however, is quite an old one, that entitled, "On the Holy Spirit," by John Owen, D.D., in two volumes. It was written in 1674, but a recent edition has been published, i. e., within 25 or 30 years, copies of which can be found in the second-hand bookstores. While the style is heavy and involved after the manner of the puritans, yet the richness of the mine will repay the cost of the digging. It is from this source that many, if not most, of the later English writers on the subject have drawn most extensively. Another book, highly recommended just now, is by the Dutch theologian, Abraham Kuyper, D.D., entitled "The Work of the Holy Spirit." It is said to be "almost an encyclopedia of inspiration and discussion" on the subject. Among smaller and less expensive books, I would name first "Through the Eternal Spirit," by the Scotch divine, James Elder Cumming, D. D. If you can only get one, get this. Then come "Lectures on the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit," by William Kelly; "The Ministry of the Spirit," by A. J. Gordon, D.D.; "The Spirit of Christ," by Andrew Murray, D.D.; "The Tongue of Fire," by William Arthur, A. M.; "The Acts of the Holy Spirit," by A. T. Pierson, D.D.; "The Spirit-Filled Life," by John MacNeil; "Plain Teachings on the Holy Spirit," by C. I. Scofield, D.D.; and "The Baptism With the Holy Spirit," by R. A. Torrey. The present writer has published a small pamphlet on "The Relation of the Holy Spirit to the Believer," obtainable through the office of this publication. (5 cents).

* * * *

The Divinity of the Holy Spirit.—The Bible studies in this paragraph and the next are taken from The Word-Bearer, edited by Rev. H. S. Miller, M. A., Wilkesbarre, Pa. They will be found useful as the bases of Bible readings or discourses on the deeply instructive and quickening themes of which they treat:

"After settling the point that the Holy Spirit is a person, it is quite necessary to a correct appreciation of His power and presence in us, to understand that He is divine, and equal with the Father and the Son."

1. He is called God. In Acts 5: 3, Peter accused Ananias of lying to the Holy Ghost; and in the next verse he said that he did not lie to a mere man, but to God. In Jer. 31: 31-34 we are told that the Lord Jehovah spoke about a new covenant that He would make, while according to Heb. 10: 15-17 it was the Holy Ghost who thus spake. See 2 Cor. 3: 17.

2. He is Creator. (1) of the heavens, Gen. 1: 1, 2. Job 26: 13. (2) Of man, Gen. 1: 26, 27. Job 33: 4. (3) Of spiritual life, Jno. 1: 12, 13; 3: 5. People are born of the Spirit when they are born of God. A study of these texts shows that He does what God does and what only God can do.

3. He is omnipotent or all-powerful as God is, Luke 1: 35. I Cor. 12: 4-11.

4. He is omnipresent, or everywhere present at the same time. This is another attribute of God. Compare Ps. 139: 7-13 with Prov. 15: 3. He indwells believers all over the earth forever, Jno. 14: 16, 17.

5. He is omniscient, or all-wise, as God is. Compare Rom. 11: 33-36; 16: 27 with 1 Cor. 2: 9-14.

6. He has foreknowledge, as God has. Compare Luke 2: 26 and Jno. 16: 13 with 1 Pet. 1: 3.

7. He is eternal, as God is. Compare Ps. 90: 2 with Heb. 9: 14.

These Scrpitures will assist us to realize that when we receive the Holy Spirit, we are receiving the Eternal God in the person of the Spirit, and that we have Him abiding. He is a person, but not a mere man. He is God—God dwelling in us, all-powerful and all-wise. Appropriate Him and, relying upon Him "to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think," give Him complete right of way in your life.

* * * *

The Holy Spirit of Jesus. —1. It was prophesied that the Spirit would come upon and indwell Jesus. Is. 11: 2; 42: 1; 61: 1-3. Matt. 12: 17, 18. So with the believer, Joel 2: 28, 29, realized in some measure at Pentecost, Acts 2: 17, 18.

2. Jesus was born of the Spirit into a holy life on earth, Matt. 1: 18-20. Lu. 1: 35. So must the sinner be, Jno. 3: 3-7.

3. Jesus was baptized with the Spirit for service, Matt. 3: 11, 16. Mark 1: 8, 10. Luke 3: 16, 22. Jno. 1: 32, 33. He did not attempt to work for God until this was done. Much more should the believer observe the same rule, Luke 24: 49. Acts 1: 4-8.

4. Jesus was filled with the Spirit, Lu. 4:1. So must the believer be, Eph. 5: 18. This is for power for holy living, or separation unto God.

5. Jesus was led by the Spirit to be tested by the Devil, Matt. 4: 1. Luke 4: 1. So God will have a tested people, and it is when one is filled with the Spirit that Satan attacks him most severely.

6. Jesus came off victorious through the power of the Spirit, Lu. 4: 14. So may we, Is. 59: 19, margin. Gal. 5: 16.

7. Jesus did His work through the power of the Spirit, Luke 4: 18. Acts 1: 2; 10: 38. Matt. 12: 28. We must do the same if there is to be any results, 1 Cor. 2: 4, 13. Acts 1: 8; 6: 3, 8, 10; 9: 15-17.

8. Jesus kept Himself spotless and offered Himself as a sacrifice to God through the eternal Spirit, Heb. 9: 14. In no other way can he present us spotless and wrinkleless, Eph. 5: 18, 25-27. It is only as the Spirit indwells and sheds abroad the love of God, that we will be willing to lay down our lives for others.

Jesus is the great example, 1 Pet. 2: 21. We are to walk as He walked, 1 Jno. 2: 6. If He needed the Spirit, how much more do we.

* * * *

The Work of the Comforter. —"And when He is come, He will reprove the world of

sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." John xvi, 8. The following outline of a sermon on this text was taken down by the writer perhaps twenty years ago from the lips of Rev. Dr. Manning, pastor at that time of the Old South, Boston. He soon after passed into rest, and whether this sermon appears in any form in any published work of his is unknown to me.

1. The Work of the Comforter is to make men feel their *need to be saved.* (He shall convince of sin.) Do men thus require to be convinced? Yes. They do not require to be thus convinced of crime, since the laws of the land and their relation to society accomplishes that. Neither do they require to be thus convinced of wrongdoing, since their own moral sense does that. But sin is different from both. Sin is a Bible word. Besides the crime or wrong done to man, it is also done to God. And even though there be no crime or wrong to men, there is still sin toward God. Does man say, "I don't need to be convinced of sin towards God in order to repent?" How then can they repent, unless they have done that which requires repentance, and are assured of it?

2. The work of the Comforter is to make men feel that they *may be saved.* (He shall convince of righteousness.) That is, that there is a true salvation. There are different kinds of righteousness, the sacramental, ritualistic righteousness, the righteousness based upon a covenant with the forefathers, the righteousness of works, etc., but the righteousness of which the Holy Ghost convinces is the righteousness which God gives to men through Christ. Romans iii, 22; 2 Corinthians, v. 21.

3. The work of the Comforter is to make men feel that they *may not be saved.* (He shall convince the world of judgment.) That is, of an overcoming of evil, a final victory of Christ, as with Satan in the wilderness, as with all evil in us. If we do not accept the righteousness of Christ by faith, we shall be overcome of evil in the last judgment.

III.

HOMILETIC TREATMENT OF GENESIS.

14. *Family Worship.*—"And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there; and make there an altar unto God." xxxv, 1. God is interested in, and should be consulted about our earthly dwelling places. Our residential changes are some of the "all thy ways" in which we should acknowledge Him. The family altar is expected to be set up wherever the people of God find a home. The context shows that the obligation of Jacob to set up the altar was founded on blessings received before he became the head of a family, but as the family shared the fruit of the blessing they were also to share in the acknowledgment of it. There is much profitable instruction in this last thought.

15. *Temporal Prosperity from God.*—"The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man." xxxix, 2. The verses immediately following will contribute to the development of this theme. See also the other instances specified in which Joseph was favored because "the Lord was with him." The book of Proverbs will be found especially useful in illustrating this theme. Compare also Genesis xxx, 27-30; 2 Chronicles xvi, 5; Proverbs, x, 22; 1 Samuel iii, 19; Psalm i, 3; xxxvii, 3-6 Jeremiah xv, 20; Romans viii, 31.

16. *Wrongdoing Seen in Its True Perspective.*—"How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" xxxix, 9. Compare Psalm li, 4; Leviticus vi, 1-7; James ii, 9.

17. *A Master in Hermeneutics.*—"Do not interpretations belong to God?" xl, 8. Compare Psalm xxv, 14; Isaiah viii, 19; Daniel ii, 28; 1 Corinthians ii, 7-16.

18 *The Inside Known by the Outside.*—"A man in whom the Spirit of God is." xli, 38. How did Pharoah know this of Joseph? What power and privileges came to Joseph because of it? Compare the marginal references always for illustrative material. Also in this case, Luke ii, 25-27, xi, 13; John xiv, 15-20; Acts ii, 1-4, etc.

19. *Misinterpreting Providence.*—"All these things are against me." xlii, 36. The reader of the story knows that all these things were not against him, but for him. For other instances of like misinterpretations of God's dealings see the histories of David, 1 Samuel xxvii, 1; Job vii, 7; and Hezekiah, Isaiah xxxviii. The words in Genesis literally mean, "all these things lie upon me as heavy loads, hastening my death; they are more than I can bear." For this thought compare 1 Corinthians x, 13.

20. *God's Hand in Human History.*—"So it was not you that sent me hither, but God." xlv, 8.

21. *Encouragements to Faith.*—"When he saw the wagons * * * the spirit of Jacob revived." xlv, 27.

Preach the Gospel.

J. F. Shaw, Simpson Memorial Church, Long Branch, N. J., sends us an attractive folder announcing gospel sermons, which will be reviewed in "Methods," and says:

"The great appreciation of the people is best seen in the crowded congregations that gather to hear them. We invariably make the Sunday evening service evangelistic in spirit and have had conversions, most blessed, during this series of sermons. Let ministers preach the old gospel and they will find their churches crowded with warm hearts to hear him. Our choir has been of invaluable service to us, by their rendering music, especially appropriate to the subject."

Copies of Current Anecdotes for Your Friends.

We have a few copies of November and December Current Anecdotes, that will be sent to any of your friends if you will give us their names and addresses. Both numbers contain special features.

STUDIES IN NEGLECTED TEXTS.

By Rev. G. B. F. Hallock, D. D.

ACQUAINTANCE WITH GOD.

"Acquaint thyself with Him, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee." Job. 22:21.

"There is but one thing needful—to know God." The "acquaintance" spoken of implies not mere personal knowledge, but that intimacy and familiarity which subsists between friends.

I. *How shall we know God? What are the means of acquaintanceship with Him?*

It is a well known fact that Nature teaches us something about God. "The heavens declare," etc. The majesty, wisdom, power and skill of God are seen in the material universe. God makes himself known in the soul of man. But this knowledge is inadequate. We therefore put emphasis upon the first great means by which men acquaint themselves with God.

1. Through his word. It is through his word that we come definitely to know God as Creator and Governor of the universe, as the Benefactor and Preserver of all and as the God of all grace.

2. Through His spirit. Only God's mind can know God. The Holy Ghost is the mind of God. The constant cherishing of the Spirit's influences is a blessed means of growing in acquaintance with God.

3. Through prayer. Prayer is a means of converse for intercourse with God. Constant supplications to God through Christ will produce real and precious intimacy with him.

4. We may grow greatly in acquaintance with God through a constant study of his providences. God is made known to his people by his acts, as well as by what he says.

II. *The suitable time for seeking this acquaintance with God.* It is "now." "Acquaint now thyself with Him and be at peace." For all spiritual attainments now is the right time, the best time, the only time. The Gospel is a great importunate "Now."

1. The present is the time claimed by God.

2. The present is the only time of which you can be certain. Therefore "Acquaint now thyself with God." It is wise, safe and profitable for you to do so.

III. For notice, thirdly, *some of the blessed results of acquaintance with God.*

1. Peace. "Acquaint now thyself with Him, and *be at peace.*" Fulfill the condition and the result is sure.

2. Temporal good. "Thereby good shall come unto thee." Being a Christian brings not only salvation and peace and a good hope, but it brings temporal good, good to mind, body and estate. "Godliness is profitable unto all things," etc.

3. Eternal good. Heavenly good, eternal good, will distinguish the people of God from those who will not acquaint themselves with him in this "now" day of opportunity. Are you acquainted with God?

A MAN'S LIFE.

"A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Luke 12:15.

Can it be possible that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth? From the way we see men seeking possessions we would suppose the opposite. What will not men sacrifice and undergo and do in order to get possessions. A man may possess *things.* That may not be wrong, and may not do the man any harm; but it is very wrong and of very great harm when the things begin to possess the man, or when the man begins to estimate his life by the abundance of the things which he possesseth. In what then does a man's life consist?

I. In the first place, *it consisteth in being a Christian.* However simple that may sound, yet the fact is that that is the principal thing, the being a Christian. A man's life consists in being a Christian. Whether he have things or not matters but little; but whether he be a Christian or not matters altogether.

II. In the second place, *a man's life consisteth in leading others to be Christians.* The trouble with the "rich fool" was that he had somehow gotten the mistaken idea that a man's life consists in the abundance of the things which he possesses. The fact is that a man's consists in helping other people to possess. The best possession anyone can have is life eternal, and the best use any man can make of his money, his time, his influence, his social powers, his prayers, his efforts, is in the way of directly or indirectly leading others to be Christians.

III. In the third place, *a man's life consisteth in the perfecting of his own Christian character.* There is one kind of covetuousness God encourages. He even commands it. "Covet earnestly the best gifts." A man's life consisteth in the coveting earnestly the best gifts, and in acquiring them—gifts of patience, meekness, gentleness, faith, charity, power to be and power to bear and power to do. "Things" are trivial. Character is supremely important.

IV. In the fourth place, *a man's life consisteth in helping others to perfect their characters.* The richest men in all the world are not those who own the most money; but those who are Christians themselves, who use the most endeavor to lead others to be Christians, who do the most to perfect their own Christian characters and who do the most toward helping others in perfecting their characters. Poor indeed is every one who "layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God." Rich indeed is every one who is rich in faith, rich in hope, rich in love, rich in good works, "rich toward God." Whether rich or poor in this world's goods you may be a millionaire of character and an heir of eternal glory.

FAN THE FIRE TO A FLAME.

"Stir up the gift of God which is in thee." 2 Tim. 1:6.

Paul was interested in Timothy and gave him good advice—advice which is good for us also. The original word means the kindling of a fire, or starting it to a new life; as by a bellows. See that you kindle up into a blaze the spiritual gifts which you have. Paul wanted Timothy to use all proper means to keep the flame of pure religion burning in his soul, and thus increase his zeal in the cause of Christ.

I. *God's gifts in us need to be cultivated by personal care.*

The tendency of the flame of spiritual life unattended is to go out. We have always need for watchfulness lest we grow cold. A garden uncultivated runs to weeds. A body unfed tends toward death. A vessel not propelled is sure to drift. A fire not increasing is going out. There are so many currents to carry the Christian back that only constant effort can keep him advancing. The captain of a sailing vessel coming from Cuba thought that he had gained sixty miles one stormy day, but when the clouds cleared away and he got his reckoning he found that instead he had lost thirty. It was due to an undercurrent that had carried him back. So in the Christian life we are liable to drift by undercurrents.

II. *With the spiritual fire burning low we are in a most unhappy and useless condition.*

The backsliding Christian finds life full of distressing conditions. This is what Solomon meant when he said, "The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways." He will be filled with the ways of doubt. He will be filled with the ways of fault-finding. Everything looks wrong when the heart is wrong. He will be filled with the ways of alienation. He is almost sure to drift away from the church and Christian associations. Then he will blame them rather than himself. He will be filled with ways of despair. Being filled with his "own ways" and not God's ways fills him with despair; and this brings conscious spiritual paralysis.

III. *But whether we are backsliders or not our duty is to "stir up the gift of God which is in us."*

Kindle up the fire. Fan the flame. This we must do if religion is not to be a dead or stationary thing, but active, burning, increasing. We must continually stir up the gifts God has already given. You may warn yourself by warning others. You may save yourself by saving others, as did the Alpine traveller when he carried his freezing companion.

WHAT ATTRACTS PEOPLE TO CHURCH?

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." Ps. 122:1.

What attracts people to church? Why do those who love it come? Why do others not love it and not come? How can we meet the problem of leading the unchurched to love the church and come?

I. *Why do those who love it come?* What attracts them?

1. A social instinct does. The church is a social organization.

2. The music does. People almost universally love music.

3. The preaching does. To say nothing of its spiritual helpfulness, there is great intellectually stimulating and educational value in listening to good preaching.

4. The impulse to worship does. Man is a worshiping animal. He has an instinct for social worship, and appreciates the privilege of coming together with others and engaging in the exercise of praise and prayer and adoration.

5. Spiritual homesickness does. We all need a church home as a resting place for the soul, as a feeding place for the soul, as a place of mutual sympathy and help. People feel this need and seek the church.

II. *Why do others not love it and not come?*

1. There are some who hate the church. Why? In many cases it is simply because it rebukes them for their sins.

2. There are others who have simply grown indifferent through neglect. They simply "got out of the habit of coming."

3. There are yet others who really do not know of its value. They are not brought up to attend. They do not hate the church; they simply do not know it.

III. *How can we meet the problem of leading the unchurched to love the Church and attend upon its services?* This is a very grave and difficult question, hard to answer. We can only hope to offer a few suggestions that may be of value.

1. Get the children. Some one has said, "You can make something out of a Scotchman if you can catch him young." Catch people young.

2. Reach the parents through their children.

3. By persistent invitation. This is a day of advertising and of personal solicitation in business. Let us use the same means in "our Father's business."

4. By increased hospitality when people do come. Be very friendly. Let it be seen that the church wants them.

5. By wholehearted and winsome preaching of the Gospel of Christ. The gospel is good news. Let it be preached in the spirit in which good news is given. Earnest, interesting, faithful preaching of the gospel, good singing, good ushering, good lighting, good heating, good ventilating—these things will go a good way toward solving the problem of how to lead the unchurched to love the church and attend upon its services.

6. Another very great attraction would be holy living on the part of professed Christians. What some people say in the interest of religion is well enough, but their lives speak so loud the other way that men cannot hear what they say. Wanted! a revival of apostolic living.

CURRENT ANECDOTES

"PUBLISHED EXCLUSIVELY FOR MINISTERS"

A paper furnishing illustrations and their morals, for religious public speakers.

(*Incorporating Cut Gems, Troy, N. Y.*)

PUBLISHED BY

CURRENT ANECDOTES CO.

Rose Bldg., Cleveland, Ohio.

LOUIS ALBERT BANKS, EDITOR
ILLUSTRATIONS FROM CURRENT LIFE.

ELLISON R. COOK, EDITOR
METHODS OF CHURCH WORK.

F. M. BARTON, PRES. AND EDITOR.

SUBSCRIPTION: { In U. S., Canada and Mexico, ONE DOLLAR PER YEAR.

Foreign Subscriptions, 25c. extra, for postage.

[COPYRIGHTED BY CURRENT ANECDOTES CO., 1901.]

Entered at the Post Office at Cleveland, O., as second class matter.

Issued **MAY, 1901.** **Monthly**

CONTENTS:

	PAGE.
FRESH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM CURRENT LIFE	345-351
UNUSUAL— AND THE LAST HYMN	352-353
HOMILETIC DEPARTMENT	354-357
STUDIES IN NEGLECTED TEXTS	358-359
EDITORIAL	360-361
DEPARTMENT OF METHODS	362-370
BANKS' SERMONS	371-378

Dr. J. M. Gray Invited to England.

Last month we announced the call of Dr. Banks to a New York pulpit. This month we learn that Dr. Gray, editor of our homiletic department, has been invited to occupy two pulpits in Great Britain during May. One is the pulpit of G. Campbell Morgan, who is coming to the United States to take up the Moody work, and the other is the pulpit of Dr. John Robertson, City Temple, Glasgow.

Dr. Gray is well known to many of our readers, but some may not know him as the teacher of Synthetic Bible classes numbering upwards of 1,000. The New York Evangelist remarks as follows on Dr. Gray's class in the Park Street Church, Saturday afternoons:

"Its revival (of the class formerly taught by Dr. Meredith) is all the more interesting when the marked difference in the style of the two leaders is considered. Dr. Meredith attracted largely by his ready wit in asking and replying to questions from the class which rained down thick and fast; Dr. Gray's power lies in analysis and exposition of the text. The people went away from the one feeling that they had been to a great and soul-stirring meeting, they go away from the other feeling that they have the lesson in their heads and in their hearts to give out on the morrow. In both cases almost nothing would keep them away from the class when they have once a taste of its delights.

"The present class, like the former one indeed, is remarkable for the large proportion of middle aged business men it contains. We know of several who are at the head of large mercantile houses who scarcely ever fail in attendance. Others who cannot well be present themselves allow certain of their clerks the privilege. Another peculiarity is the attraction of the class for other than Sunday school teachers. It has come to be a sort of Elim for the spiritually tired and thirsty ones over a wide area, and Dr. Gray usually contrives to keep that class in view, offering the palm tree and the well for their rest and refreshment. Some of these come as long a distance as forty miles to get the benefit of the class."

The Minister's Double Life.

See Hebrews 7: 25 to 27. The latter reads. "Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's," etc. Notice that the priests offered sacrifice for their own sins and then for the people's. This offering has been done once for all by Christ. But how do you receive the advantage? By coming into relation with Christ. Do we preachers come into relation with Christ first for our own sake and then for our people?

The manifold duties of a pastor, made more severe and less joyous by reason of the meagre response to the gospel, have led many of us to merge our personal spiritual life into our official Christian life, and our time is so much occupied in praying for our church and ministering to it that we have no time to meditate or learn God's will for our own lives and daily walk and conversation. Whereat the devil is mightily pleased. For after all, when temptation comes we fall back on our own personal relations to God. Our church may be prospering, temporally, even spiritually, but that does not avail. Nothing avails, but the receipt of a message from the Captain of our Salvation, who may tell us that He has prayed for us, or that He will not leave us, or some assurance, either borne on the wings of the Spirit, or revealed by the Spirit, in the Word.

The subject of G. B. F. Hallock's outline, crowded out of "Neglected Texts," was: Keeping ourselves in the love of God. The first part may not apply, but we give all of it herewith. Paul speaks of the possibility of himself being cast away. Let us work out our own salvation. It is of even more importance than that of our congregation. For how can we show forth treasures new and old, when through lack of spiritual health and vigor we cannot discern them?

KEEPING OURSELVES IN THE LOVE OF GOD.

Jude 21.

In order to keep ourselves in a loving attitude towards God there are some things to be avoided and some things actively to be done.

I. *Things to be avoided.*

1. Avoid the indulgence of a worldly spirit. We have read of a boy who tied his horse to his arm. The horse ran away and the boy was much injured. We must hold the world so loosely that it can never drag us with it.

2. Never parley with temptation. Temptation is an enemy outside the castle gate seeking by persuasion to gain an entrance, but when once we let it in we will find it a Trojan horse full of armed men to overcome us.

3. Never compromise with sin. Never say, "I will choose the least of two evils." Choose neither. Because it was cold and the camel asked the Arab to let him put his head into the door of his tent. There being no hindrance he got in with his fore feet. Then with his whole body. "Hold," said the Arab, "there is not room enough for two." "Then," said the camel, "you had better get out." That is the way it always ends. Compromises with sin are always dangerous.

II. *Things to be done.*

Religion is not a series of "don'ts." We cannot pump darkness out of a room. It cannot be baled out. Open the windows and let in the light. So we cannot force evil out of the soul except by letting God in. What are some of the things that let in light to the soul? (1) Prayer. (2) Study of the Bible. (3) Meditation. (4) Association with Christian companions. (5) The preserving of a tender conscience. (6) The engaging humbly and heartily in every form of Christian service. If we would keep ourselves in the love of God, we must cultivate the graces and imitate Him in deeds of mercy and loving kindness.

Synthetic Bible Studies.

See Page 339.

"It is a bird's-eye view of the Bible."—Westminster Teacher.

"We heartily commend 'Synthetic Bible Studies,' which contains more than two hundred large and full pages, is the production of one of the most successful and best-known teachers of the Bible in this country. After giving instructions to many thousands in the large cities East and West, he has embodied his method in this volume for the use of his own students and of others who may desire to pursue the same plan. The papers originally appeared in a religious weekly, and were so widely used and blessed to ministers and Bible students generally, that in response to an earnest and very general request they have been gathered together in this more permanent form. They cover twenty-two books of the Old Testament and twenty-one books of the New Testament, so as to give practically a complete view of the Bible."—Homiletic Review.

"It is many years since a Bible study help has been given to the world of which so many commendatory things may be said. We can think of many uses for this book, but perhaps the most obvious is that it furnishes the pastor with material for years of expository preaching."—Record of Christian Work.

"No one has contributed more than Dr. Gray to the modern revival of Bible study. Till now these lessons have been in oral form. They are suited to both private and class use, to students and doctors of divinity."—Epworth Herald.

"We know of no way in which one can so easily and satisfactorily get a comprehensive view of the Bible."—Pittsburg Christian Advocate.

"Favorite Texts of Famous People."

See Page 339.

"This volume contains nearly a thousand favorite texts of famous people, and a fine collection of quotable illustrations of important truths, together with a list of the hundred best chapters and verses, making it both an interesting and valuable book for all who use the Bible."—U. B. Quarterly Review.

"This book shows how Scripture texts are interwoven in the daily life of many persons."—Religious Telescope.

"A rich feast of fat things for the devout and all who love the Holy Book."—Zion's Herald.

"All sorts and conditions of men have had favorite texts, and they have proved to be as handy as a pocket in a shirt."—Rochester Herald.

"Favorite texts of Famous People has greatly interested us. It shows how the Word of God affects the lives of men and women."—The Watchword.

"A unique idea skillfully executed."—Christian Endeavor World.

"A novel and ingenious and withal profitable volume. It will do good."—Epworth Herald.

"An extremely suggestive and unique collection of personal testimonies."—Margaret Sangster.

"I have much enjoyed the book already, and expect to find still more help and inspiration in it."—Pansy.

"A valuable addition to the books of the day. Send me four copies. I want to give them to my friends."—J. Wilbur Chapman.

"A very interesting compilation, both in the intrinsic value of the suggestions made by distinguished men, and as a reflection of their own sentiment."—John D. Long, Secretary United States Navy.

"A most interesting contribution to Biblical literature and a beautiful book."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Wanted Copies of March Anecdotes.

Wanted, 25 copies of the March issue. Your subscription will be extended two months if you will send us a copy of the March 1901 issue, or we will pay 10 cents for March 1901 copies.

HOW TO MAKE A WORKING CHURCH.

SUGGESTIVE HINTS, METHODS AND PLANS GATHERED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES.

Second Paper—Second Series.

We give first place this month to a description of "The New Century Advance Movement of the Colfax (Iowa) Presbyterian Church," Rev H. Quickenden, pastor. If the church is to hold her own in this fast moving age in which we live there must be much aggressive work done. We are impressed with this ringing call, and especially with the provision which the plan makes for pledging the members to specified duties. We cannot better explain the plan than to give the letter in full and the form of the pledge. The letter and pledge form can of course be adopted to suit local conditions and for successful use in a church of any denomination.

THE NEW CENTURY
ADVANCE MOVEMENT
—OF THE—
Colfax (Iowa) Presbyterian Church.

"Speak unto the Children of Israel that they go Forward."

The session desires each member to read and carefully consider every sentence of this pastoral letter. The time has come when we must advance. A crisis is upon us. Our church is on trial. The word seems to be "now or never." We thank God for prosperity to the church in several directions. By hard work of the trustees and sacrifices of friends and members we have kept out of debt, paying all obligations promptly. Our Sunday School has doubled in membership and gifts and greatly increased in efficiency. Rarely is church harmony more complete. Other phases of the work are successful. This is, however, little of what we ought and are able to do. There are indications that our Presbyterian church has a great opportunity here and now to which God is calling it. If we neglect some one will take our place and our reward, or the powers of evil will destroy those we love. This is now the emphatic message: We must be loyal to the two Sunday preaching services. It is by the numbers present at these that newcomers and outsiders judge the church. If there is nothing there for you, they will think there is nothing there for them. Your absence is not only a loss to you, but means that you may be guilty of destroying the church of God. Besides, our audience room is so much larger than others that it requires the presence of every member to make an adequate showing; and with such the pastor can preach with more force and freedom.

Our excuses for absence are too often trifling, insincere, such as do not keep us from other places and such as we could not give conscientiously to our Master. If we excuse for holiday seasons, company, Sunday funerals, family cares, hot, cold and stormy days, special services elsewhere, small ailments and inconveniences, there will be scarcely a Sunday left for God's church and our spiritual nourishment. Say rather with Jesus, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," and "I must be in my Father's house," or with Job, "I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food." Most of those who do come could find just as good excuses as those who stay away. Let us be noble enough to recognize and discharge the obligations of our membership.

A larger attendance at both preaching services will bring us more spirituality, more members, more money. It will encourage our pastor to stay with us and thus reap the advantages of a widening acquaintance; and it will make the field attractive to an able minister when the present pastorate shall be brought to a close. We can attend regularly if we plan for it—if we really want to attend. "Where there is a will there is a way."

Let each member make it a special object also for the coming year to bring with himself one person into regular attendance. God is always ready to bless our church when we do our part. While not overlooking other church engagements let us make it a special

object to increase the attendance at both preaching services. Most other desirable things will follow as a result. Let the effort be continuous, not spasmodic. He who died for us calls us to make sacrifice. We are not worthy of the name "Christian" if we do not. Make your consecration definite by checking off the items on the opposite page.

The pastor desires to thank you for past loyalty and help. Now for a long pull, a strong pull and pull altogether. We cannot be led to any success unless we fall in with the plans of our leaders. Will you heed this appeal for Christ's sake?

Faithfully yours,

H. QUICKENDEN, Pastor,
Presbyterian Church, Colfax, Iowa.

J. R. Sharp, P. H. Cragan, Nathan Patterson, Elders.

Form of Pledge.

Membership involves obligation to support the church in every way to the full measure of your ability and opportunity. Below is a list of the different ways of helping arranged so that you may indicate to the pastor how much you are interested in the Lord's work. By marking a cross in the square thus (X) the pastor asks you to pledge yourself, by God's help, to perform such duties as you may indicate by the crosses made in the several squares. Such duties to be performed except when prevented by reasons you can conscientiously give to the Lord. Check off all you will try to do and be sure that it is more, if possible, than you did last year. "Seek first the kingdom of God."

Will you cast your vote for a strong or weak church? Ask God to make you willing to do your whole duty.

- ☐ 1—Attend Morning Worship.
- ☐ 2—Attend Evening Worship.
- ☐ 3—Attend Prayer Meeting.
- ☐ 4—Attend Sunday School.
- ☐ 5—Financial Support of the Church.
- ☐ 6—Visitation Work.
- ☐ 7—Observe Daily Prayer and Bible Reading.
- ☐ 8—Attend Endeavor Meeting.
- ☐ 9—Attend Ladies' Aid Society.
- ☐ 10—Attend Women's Missionary Society.
- ☐ 11—Attend Choir Rehearsal.

What advance have you indicated over last year? Please mark, sign name and return this page to the pastor.

.....

Our Page of Forms.

We have received a score or more of letters since the April number of Current Anecdotes was sent out, expressing very high appreciation of our page on which we reproduce in fac simile attractive forms of church printing. Current Anecdotes and Methods of Church Work is the only periodical published which renders this practical service to pastors. We not only tell how the work is to be done, but illustrate how it has been successfully accomplished. Frequently cards lose their effectiveness because local printers have no sort of idea how they should be gotten up. These illustrations are not only helpful to the pastor, giving him valuable suggestions as to matter, but may be used as a guide to the printer.

Go to Church Bands.

Our brief article on "How to Bring the Children to Church" created much interest. We received over 300 letters requesting samples of the Attendance Punch Cards and other accessories to the plan.

As Rev. R. W. Lewis, Secretary "The On Timer's Tribe," says in April Current Anecdotes, "If one-half the education, money, effort, etc., now devoted to rescuing adults was but directed towards the salvation of the children the hearts of ministers would not ache as they do now for the spiritual dearth everywhere prevailing."

There is undoubtedly a revival of interest among pastors in the work for children and we reproduce this month (See Nos. 4, 4½, and 4½—) three forms of "Go-to-Church Band" cards. The Pastor's Supplies Co., Washington, Ga., will furnish these cards postpaid at 75 cents per 100. A good conductor's punch at 75 cents. Handsome medals, with cross and crown on one side and Lord's Prayer on the other, 10 cents each. Or if a cheaper prize is desired the Celluloid Pin, beautiful flowers in colors, with appropriate text of scripture, only 15 cents per dozen. We give this information because so many of our readers not only want to know how to do things, but where to get things. Organize a "Go-to-Church Band." You will be delighted with the results, parents will be interested, the children will be delighted and benefited. On Easter Sunday we presented thirty-eight medals to as many faithful boys and girls, who had attended services every Lord's Day for three months.

For Evangelistic Services.

We call special attention to form No. 11. Our plan is to use the Sunday night service for preaching to the unconverted, and we have known this card to be used with most gratifying results. Immediately after the sermon, while a song is being sung, have your ushers to pass down the aisles and offer the cards to any who will accept them, and then gather them in the collection baskets. This gives the pastor an opportunity to follow up any impressions that may have been made. It is just at this point that we so often fail to conserve the results of our preaching.

Invite the Young People.

Specimen No. 22, is a neat and convenient form for an invitation card. Oblong in shape, it fits nicely in the vest pocket. Unique in form, it will attract attention.

THE LOVERS OF A CHEERFUL GIVER.

By the Reverend David M. Steele.

[Copyrighted, 1901, by the Curtis Publishing Co., and republished by courtesy of the Ladies' Home Journal.]

Among the experiences which come to young professional men none are more interesting, and at the same time more exasperating, than those in which men try to "do" them. The young bank clerk is presented with counterfeit money; the young doctor is called at night to attend cases where he need never expect to be paid; the lawyer wastes his time over cases which are compromised at the last moment; but the clergyman, most of all, is beset by frauds of every kind.

The writer of these notes has been for two years the assistant minister in one of the large New York City churches. During that time literally hundreds of persons have found their way here seeking help of some kind. As one important part of his office, technically, is to "intimate to the minister in charge the estate, names and dwelling places of the sick, poor and impotent people of the parish," these cases all come, either first or last, to him. With them he has his own troubles and his own fun; for in the scenes presented pathos, interest and amusement are all combined.

KEPT HIS VICTIMS ON A LITTLE LIST.

One morning a man came to me with a letter written on stamped paper and signed with the name of a clergyman of my church in a town in Massachusetts. His story, told in great embarrassment, was that he had run away from home. According to the letter his aged mother was dying with grief, and the appeal of his rector was to the man to come back at once. The minister's check for eight dollars, drawn on a bank in this same town, was inclosed with which to pay carfare. He was distressed and was anxious to go, but the difficulty was he had been in New York only five days, knew no one, and could not be identified at any bank. Would I cash the check?

"Why should I?" Well, he had been in the habit of going to church all his life, had found himself now located within the limits of this parish, and came to me in the hope that I might know the man who had written the letter. I looked in the church register and found, truly enough, that such a man was in charge of such a church. But when I asked some questions the story rather fell apart. I told him to come back in a couple of hours, and meantime I telegraphed inquiries to the Reverend C———. The answer came, "Do not know any such man."

When the fellow returned he was arrested, and in his pocket a neatly kept memorandum book was found containing the name of nearly every clergyman in Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Pittsburg and Philadelphia. This had been his route. On each page of the book there were four columns, headed "Name, Date, Amount and Remarks," and in these were such entries as, "Reverend R———, $4.00. Got after an hour's work." "Reverend S———, No good. Can't work." "Reverend T———, $6.00. An easy mark." The dates ran back through three years. When he had completed his tour he would probably either have sold his book to some one else to use, or he would have changed his appearance, invented a new story and approached a second time the people who were worth it.

A man came to me the other day who said that he was out of work, out of money, was cold and hungry and distressed, and all this in spite of the fact that he had a lucrative position awaiting him in the town of X———. If only he could borrow fifty cents to pay his carfare. I turned mentally to that page of my catechism which applied to his case and began: "How long have you been out of work?" "Six months." "How long have you been out of money?" "Two days." "When did you learn of this job?" "Night before last, an hour after spending the last cent." "How long will they hold it for you?" "Only till tomorrow." Then he became excited and grew vehement in his statements. He "had eaten nothing for two days; had walked the streets all night looking for some one to lend him fifty cents." He assured me that he was "desperate and did not know how soon he would———"

"But," I interrupted, "how far is it to this town of X———?" "Fifteen miles." "And has it not occurred to you," I said, "that if, instead of walking for forty-eight hours in a circle, you had walked three hours in a straight line you would have been there?" He immediately turned and left me, the maddest man I ever saw.

A DEAF AND DUMB BEGGAR TRAPPED.

Late one evening a young man found his way up to my study and came in. When I asked him to be seated he remained standing just inside the door staring at me. I asked him his errand, but he still looked stolid and said nothing. I pointed to a chair at the opposite side of a table from myself, and he sat down. He then took from his pocket a piece of paper on which there was written in lead pencil the statement, "I am deaf and dumb; I have been sick; I have been out of work," etc., ending with a request for a coat and a pair of shoes.

I looked at him again, and, to say the least, did not feel my sympathy go out to him. He had an ugly countenance and a vicious look. I remembered stories I had read of persons who pretended to be deaf and dumb, and recalled some of the methods used to catch them up, such as speaking their sweetheart's name, or crying "Fire!" to make them start. I decided that any of these would be ridiculous if they failed, and undignified even if they succeeded. Still, I felt sure he was a fraud and longed for the amusement of detecting him.

I took up his paper and on the blank part

of it wrote, "Are you totally deaf and dumb?" He read it and nodded his head. "Have you always been so?" I wrote. Again he made the affirmative sign. "Can't you hear a word?" I wrote. He shook his head violently.

I looked him over and said in my ordinary voice: "Well, that's pretty hard! Poor fellow! Wants a pair of shoes, does he? Guess I have a pair that will fit him." Then, in a muttered tone, and with my fingers over my mouth, so that he could not possibly have read the motion of my lips, I said: "What size do you wear?" He started up suddenly, reached for the paper and wrote, "Number seven."

THREAT OF SUICIDE USUALLY EFFECTIVE.

A common method of trying to arouse interest when other methods fail is to speak of suicide. I suppose that twenty people threatened it in my presence last summer. At least they hinted at it, for, while the threat was sometimes bold and defiant, it was more often intentionally vague and half expressed. These statements are almost never to be taken seriously. The man who talks about committing suicide never does it, and, conversely, the man who really means to do it never talks about it.

There was one case, however, that came near developing a tragic aspect. A man came to my room one evening after dark, who had been to see me once before. He said he had come to bid me goodby as he was going away. When I asked him why he had come to me he said it was because I had been kind to him and no one else ever had been. This was gratifying. When I asked him where he was going he began to sob and to talk about how hard he had tried to do right, how he had hunted for work and couldn't find it, how he had slept in the streets, how he had had nothing to eat for days because he would not beg and would not steal, etc.

In his distress he began to walk up and down the room. I thought I noticed him fingering something in a deep coat pocket, and, as he turned at my elbow, I turned, faced him sharply, and told him to give it to me. He was greatly surprised on being detected and refused to give it up. I laid hold of him, and, when he resisted, threw him on the floor and wrenched from his hand a package of poison.

He was greatly distressed. I consoled him and went with him to the street. I took him to a hotel, and, when I had paid for his supper and a bed, made him promise to come and see me next morning about getting work.

The next morning came but he did not, and I grew uneasy. The following week there was a meeting of the Clerical Club at which the men were telling their experiences along this line. One of them told of an adventure with a man the day before which so nearly duplicated mine that I said nothing, but on returning home I opened my "poison" package. It was filled with granulated sugar. Thus these cases range through all the scale of seriousness, from the creature who is desperate to the happy-go-lucky mortal who takes nothing seriously, least of all himself. One of this latter species tumbled in on me one night, and, in the broken parlance of two drinks too much asked for five cents. When I observed that there might be some doubt as to his method of spending it he assured me that he did not want to drink it, but simply must have the money for carfare to get home.

"Where do you live?"

"Sixty-seventh street! Can't you give me even five cents?"

"Yes, I can!" I said. "But I have often walked that far myself to save a nickel. Why can't you do it?"

He leered at me and said: "You shee, Dominie, that's jist the point. You're shober and I'm drunk. If I try to walk uptown I'll sthagger and git arreshted."

A BUNCO GAME PURE AND SIMPLE.

And so they go. One man comes to tell you that his wife has long been sick and that the doctor now refuses to come any longer unless something is paid on his bill. But when you ask for the doctor's name and address it is not forthcoming. Another man has long been unfortunate but now his troubles are over. He has been engaged by Blank & Co. to go to work next week at a good salary, if only he can borrow enough money this week to buy a new suit of clothes. But when you suggest that you have a telephone and will call up Blank & Co. to verify the statement he makes his escape. Once in a while he hints at some sad romance. "If you knew who I was you would be astonished ——" Then, with a manifest attempt at self-control, he brings from his pocket a wedding ring. He "would rather sell it to you than pawn it——. It is worth a hundred dollars—— Can you give me five for it?" Or he is more cheerful and tells you who he is. Incidentally, he mentions as a relative some friend of yours.

This is the bunco game pure and simple. He has learned your name and your friend's name beforehand. But sometimes he makes a mistake. He greeted the Bishop of ——— on the street one day with "Ah! The Reverend Doctor So-and-So, I believe!" The Bishop, who is noted for his gruffness, glowered at him with "Ugh! If you believe that you would believe anything!"

THE WORLD IS FULL OF GULLIBLE PEOPLE.

Are there any genuine cases? There is on record a statement of the late Dr. John Hall that in all the years of his experience in New York City he had never found one. Certainly of the two hundred strangers who have come to me during the past year not one was worthy of any help of the particular kind for which they asked.

Oh, yes! There was just one—a poor, lone, helpless young Englishman. He came to me one dark, dismal night, weary, wet and dishevelled. He reminded me of nothing in the world so much as of one of the pictures of Smike in my old illustrated edition of "Nicholas Nickelby." I gave him some money. Six weeks later he came back and I helped him

again. I was really gratified to find so worthy a subject.

Soon after he came to me for the third time, but I referred him to the Bureau of Charities, and at the same time wrote to them for information. This morning there lies on my desk their "Report in the Case of George Thompson." It covers three closely typewritten pages. He is known both here and in London. His record runs back over five years. During that time he has been referred to them under six different names, and by twenty different clergymen. He has defrayed the expenses of five passages across the ocean, has had money given him for seven tickets between New York and Philadelphia, has stopped for longer or shorter time at six different "homes," has been tended, lodged, fed and clothed, and, incidentally, it comes to light that he is the man who is wanted by the police for the theft of some half-dozen services of silverware. Today he is in the station house. That was my one genuine case!

But what makes them do it? In most cases the expenditure of time and trouble must be out of all proportion to the returns. Why do men invent such stories? They must employ more brains, expend more energy and waste more time than would insure success in some legitimate business. If this were a treatise, instead of a narrative, a study of mental pathology might be made, but it is not. Besides, there is a more simple answer. I got it from one of these men himself. I said to him: "I do not believe a word of what you say. Now, either you are foolish to waste your time in this way or else there must be a lot of very gullible people in the world." He looked at me in a comical fashion and said: "Well, partner, there are!"

[If our readers will give instances of their being defrauded during the past year, with description of swindler, we will publish, without giving names.—Ed.]

Card Index Systems.

This Up-to-Date Method Adapted to Pastors' Use and to the Work of the Church.

How frequently do we see illustrated the truth of the statement, "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." For some years, business men who are alert always to "catch on" to anything that means the saving of money or time in the conduct of their business, have been using what is known as the "Card Index System." This system is now being used in almost every line of business and in many of the professions. To no line of business or profession is the Card Index System better adapted than for the use of pastors and church treasurers.

Confident that many of our readers will be interested in anything that will facilitate and make more efficient their work, we give in this article a brief explanation of this system as adapted to pastor's use.

In the Card Index System the matter to be indexed is recorded on cards properly ruled and printed for the purpose of the record. The cards are then placed on edge in tray or cabinet drawers, and between the card, tabs, or guide cards, with letters of the alphabet, numbers or names on the tab. These guide cards extend above the other cards to facilitate reference.

The accompanying illustration will convey the idea better than can be described.

Specimens Nos. 14, 15, 16, on our page of card forms, show several styles of cards which can be used to very great advantage.

Specimen No. 14 is designed for use of church treasurers. The form was devised by the editor of this department and is, *we think*, superior to any form we have seen. These cards and the cases may be had at reasonable price from the Church Envelope Co., Cleveland, O., or Pastor's Supplies Co., Washington, Ga.

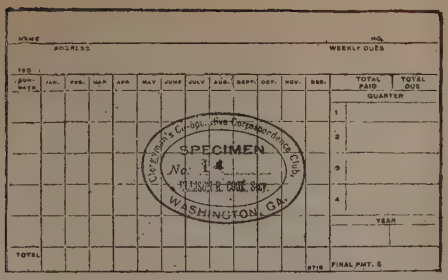
Specimen No. 15 is for a pastor's roll of his membership. As will be seen, it provides for a full "church history" of each individual member. With convenient spaces for a record of calls, contributions for the various benevolent causes of the church and remarks.

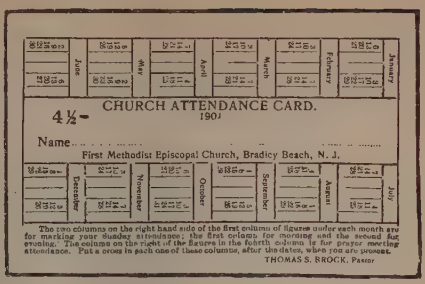
The superiority of this system over any book form lies, *first:* In its *Contractibility*, no useless matter need be retained; in a book names of members removed, dead or lost sight of continue to occupy space and there is no way of weeding them out except by rewriting the entire roll, and as changes are constantly being made this is of course impracticable. Any pastor who has ever tried to call, or copy a roll from a "chronological roll" can fully appreciate this advantage. Such a roll ought to be kept, of course, in every church, but a busy pastor wants a live roll for his use.

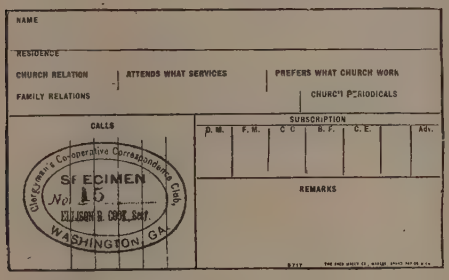
Second: Its *Expansibility*—only one end—the beginning. There is no limit to the extent of the Card Index, not only as regards the variety of its uses, but as regards capacity. Additions can be made to it at any time by the insertion of new cards, and should the list outgrow the cabinet in which it is placed, it can be transferred to one of larger size, or another cabinet added without inconvenience or loss of time, and without any waste of material. It never has to be rewritten.

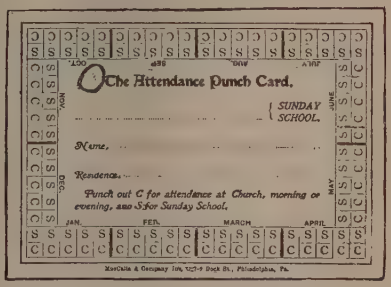
Anyone who has ever tried to keep an alphabetical or roll in a book will appreciate

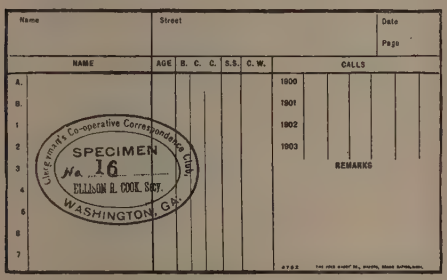
(Continued, page 368.)

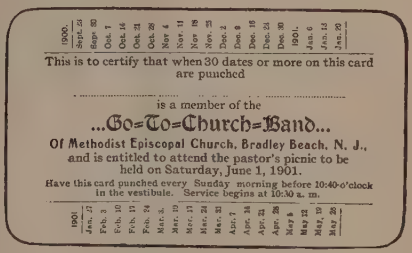



CHURCH ATTENDANCE CARD.
1901
4½-
Name
First Methodist Episcopal Church, Bradley Beach, N. J.
January
February
March
April
May
June
July
August
September
October
November
December
The two columns on the right hand side of the first column of figures under each month are for marking your Sunday attendance; the first column for morning and the second for evening. The column on the right of the figures in the fourth column is for prayer meeting attendance. Put a cross in each one of these columns, after the dates, when you are present.
THOMAS S. BROCK, Pastor

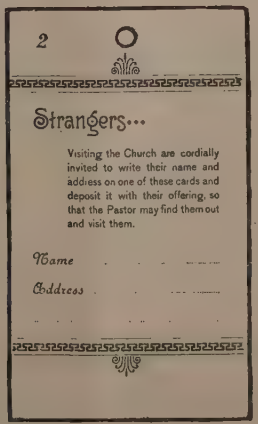


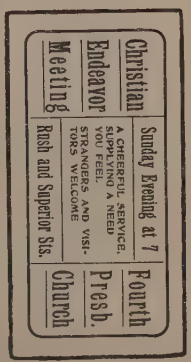

The Attendance Punch Card.
SUNDAY SCHOOL
Name,
Residence,
Punch out C for attendance at Church, morning or evening, and S for Sunday School.
JAN. FEB. MARCH APRIL
MAY JUNE JULY AUG. SEPT. OCT. NOV. DEC.
MacCalla & Company 708, 1027-9 Rock St., Philadelphia, Pa.

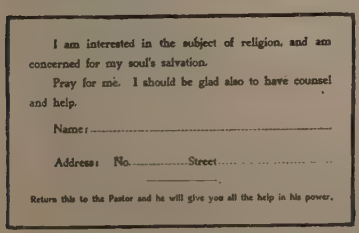



1900
Sept. 23 Sept. 30 Oct. 7 Oct. 14 Oct. 21 Oct. 28 Nov. 4 Nov. 11 Nov. 18 Nov. 25 Dec. 2 Dec. 9 Dec. 16 Dec. 23 Dec. 30
1901
Jan. 6 Jan. 13 Jan. 20 Jan. 27
This is to certify that when 30 dates or more on this card are punched
is a member of the
...Go-To-Church-Band...
Of Methodist Episcopal Church, Bradley Beach, N. J., and is entitled to attend the pastor's picnic to be held on Saturday, June 1, 1901.
Have this card punched every Sunday morning before 10:40-o'clock in the vestibule. Service begins at 10:30 a. m.
1901
Jan. 27 Feb. 3 Feb. 10 Feb. 17 Feb. 24 Mar. 3 Mar. 10 Mar. 17 Mar. 24 Mar. 31 Apr. 7 Apr. 14 Apr. 21 Apr. 28 May 5 May 12 May 19 May 26

"This do in remembrance of me"—Luke xxii. 19
Communicant's Card...
Chairman's Co-operative Correspondence Club
SPECIMEN
No. 6
ELLISON R. COOL, Sec'y.
WASHINGTON, GA.
Name
Address
"As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love."—John xv. 9.


2
Strangers...
Visiting the Church are cordially invited to write their name and address on one of these cards and deposit it with their offering, so that the Pastor may find them out and visit them.
Name
Address


Christian Endeavor Meeting
Sunday Evening at 7
A CHEERFUL SERVICE. SUPPLYING A NEED YOU FEEL.
STRANGERS AND VISITORS WELCOME
Rush and Superior Sts.
Fourth Presb. Church


I am interested in the subject of religion, and am concerned for my soul's salvation.

Pray for me. I should be glad also to have counsel and help.

Name:

Address: No. Street

Return this to the Pastor and he will give you all the help in his power.

Specimens of cards for card index systems and Church Advertising, to which reference is made in the Department of Methods. Reduced to one-half size.

this advantage. You have left in making your roll a few extra lines under A and more perhaps under S, very few under Y, and a whole family of Youngs and another of Yarbroughs join your church, and lo! your whole plan is spoiled. To make an alphabetical roll in a book that will be permanent one would have to be endowed with omniscience.

Third: Its *Accessibility.*—Always "get-at-ble." For convenience of reference nothing can equal the Card Index. The classification obtained by means of guide cards, tab cards and cards of assorted colors is so systematic that reference to any portion of the record can be made almost at a glance.

Specimen No. 16 is a card designed for keeping a roll by *families.* Spaces are provided for names, ages, etc., of all the children. Our plan is to keep in one cabinet a double roll, one of individuals card 15, and one by families card 16. For convenience, accuracy and helpfulness in a pastor's work nothing can be superior to this system.

Cards are also provided by which a pastor may index his library, by a system of references and cross references by another, title or subject of a pastor may save several months of time in a year by using a Card Index for his library.

Old methods die hard. "Old methods in any line of business," some one has said, "have as many lives as a cat." They are not easily set aside for something new. Only the modern things that have actual merit and practical utility have any rightful claim upon consideration.

Up to three or four years ago card index systems were unknown to the great body of business men. They were used in but few lines of business and then only by the most alert and progressive men of the larger concerns. The old methods, for which this system is a substitute, were considered satisfactory because the business public was not enlightened upon the simplicity, labor-saving and time-saving advantages of this modern means of record keeping.

System is often the sign-board that points out the shortest route to success. More and more are business men awakening to this significant fact, and the benefits of the Card Index System are becoming more and more apparent. Why should we, who represent the most important interest in the world, be so slow to adopt methods which would mean increased efficiency and enlarged usefulness?

If you are interested, write to either of the companies named above and full information as to prices, etc., will be sent you. Always enclose stamp for reply. See also our advertising department.

The Difference.

One main reason why men are so slow to adopt new and approved methods in the work of the church is simply because the methods are not old.

The very men who are progressive, up-to-date, alert in their private business, are often hardest to bring in line with forward movements in the church. This, we believe, grows out of the fact that they fail to distinguish the difference between the essentials of religion, its doctrine and the mere externals of religions, its forms or practice.

The fundamental doctrines of truth as announced by Christ, contained in the Bible, do not change. They, like Him, are "the same yesterday, today and forever," but in the matter of method, the mere externals of religious worship and service, there is of necessity continual change.

This was contemplated by Christ himself and consequently in the New Testament no direction concerning how to perform any service or act of worship is given. "Let all things be done decently and in order," says St. Paul, who believed, preached and advocated method and system in the work of the church.

The life which is "by the faith of the Son of God," will express itself if untrammelled in ways and means best suited to the end. It is neither wise nor religious to approve a thing that is new simply because it is new, but it is sentimental foolishness to regard everything as of the devil which is not musty with age. St. Paul is our ideal man: "Forgetting the things that are behind, holding fast to sound doctrine, laying tribute upon every resource, becoming a Jew to the Jews, a Gentile to the Gentiles," the incarnation of aggressiveness and faith, he gave no approval of conservatism (as opposed to aggressiveness) by practice or precept.

Conservatism undoubtedly has its place, and your conservative man acts as a balance wheel, or "govenor," but for a church to refuse to change a "form" which may have long since served its purpose and outlived its usefulness is to hinder the progress of Christianity and sacrifice the highest good to a mere sentiment. The Gospel of Christ was designed for all ages and nations, and the truths and doctrines of Christianity are of universal applicability, but "forms" cannot become universal as to place nor co-eval with the race except the genius of the nations is always equal and the same.

"I am with you always," is the promise of Christ, full of meaning and comfort. He is with us to will and to work for the perfecting of the saints, and the salvation of the world. Our ways and customs are nothing to Him except as they can be used by Him to the accomplishment of these ends. Old forms and new methods alike are tested by this demand. That which is inspired will always be necessary to the growth of the church and salvation of sinners. That which is of human origin will serve its purpose and then give place to some method or form better adapted to the genius of the people, or demands of the age.

New Method of Doing Old Things.

One doesn't miss a thing he's never had A man who has never carried a watch can't fully appreciate the inconvenience of being without one.

The man who has always written his business letters by hand is not readily impressed with the time-saving quality of a typewriter.

The man who has never availed himself

of the advantages of an up-to-date office convenience don't know what he is missing. But once he adopts the convenience it becomes a necessity and is indispensable.

The same principle applies in the work of a pastor and in the work of the church. The pastor whose aim it is to do the most good, accomplish the best results, must conserve his time and call to his aid the most approved of modern time and labor saving appliances. He is under vows to make the best use of his time, and if through indifference, or carelessness, or negligence, he fails to acquaint himself with that which tends to conserve his time, systematize his work and focalize his efforts, is he not recreant to his trust?

Now and then a pastor is met who, to use a not very dignified but quite expressive phrase, "turns up his nose" at any discussion of what he calls "mere details." He has no time for such trifles, his great brain is occupied with mighty questions and weighty matters. The "how" of anything is distasteful to him. He's doctor, and that's one of the reasons why your people are anxious for a change of pastors, and the next time they call a man they will inquire particularly as to whether he has an eye for details. They recognize, if you do not, that your church is a disorganized mob, and that a body of men and women, who might by thorough organization be made a mighty force in the community for good, are doing comparatively nothing.

The man herein described will not read this. He is too much occupied in preparing his philosophical disquisition to deliver to empty pews next Sunday morning. The men who are doing the work of the Lord in the world and bringing things to pass are the men who give attention, and very close attention, to the study of methods of church work.

It would surprise some men to know the character of pastors who find time to write to us commending our work and acknowledging indebtedness to this department. They are in the front ranks of the successful pastors of America.

Several of these men, who have already by their aggressive work and up-to-date methods won a high place, have promised us valuable articles in the near future. If you want to know how men who have succeeded and are succeeding do their work, renew your subscription to "Current Anecdotes and Methods of Church Work."

A New Idea.

Up-to-Date Cards for Various Uses, Now Within the Reach of Any Pastor.

Much of our time is devoted to "thinking out" plans which will be helpful to busy pastors. We are ourselves a busy pastor and have opportunity to put to practical test our plans. Experience is more satisfactory than theory.

We have devised a scheme by which the most valuable cards and forms can be had in variety and at *small cost.* Printing special forms is expensive. Many pastors of small, weak churches on limited salaries are unable to use these up-to-date methods because the cost is prohibitory.

In printing as in almost anything else, *quantity* regulates the price. That is, it costs just as much to "set up" a form to print 100 cards as to print 10,000, and the "composition" is a good part of the cost of printing. The "stock" and "press work" are often nominal factors. Frequently a pastor has no need for more than 100 cards of a particular form. To make it efficient it must contain the name of the church and pastor and location of the church. To print one single hundred cards of any neat form will cost from $1.50 to $2.00 and when there are a half-dozen or more different forms the expense discourages the pastor who really feels the need of some such work in his church.

Now in bringing our plan to the attention of our readers we believe we are

RENDERING A REAL SERVICE,

a service which will be appreciated by a large class of our subscribers.

THE PLAN

consists first of a neat, air cushion, rubber stamp, containing name of church, pastor and location. The printing done with this new patented stamp cannot be distinguished from the very best work done on a press, and our plan makes the type used in the rubber stamp harmonize with the type used in our card forms. On each of the several cards a neat bordered space in unique form is provided, so that the pastor who has a stamp can order any number of any or all the forms and in a few minutes have the entire lot neatly printed for his own church. With the old-fashioned rubber stamp, with which you are familiar, this was not practicable, because the uneven, blurred impression told everyone that it was cheap rubber stamp work, and no matter how neat the rest of the card might be it could not be in good taste. But with this new patent the work of the stamp can be distinguished only by an expert.

THE CARD FORMS.

There are five in the series at present. They will be added to from time to time. Our purpose is to bring a large variety of the very best and most approved forms thus in the reach of any pastor, no matter how small or poor his charge.

No. 1 is a "Welcome Card," to be handed visitors or strangers who worship in your church. This is a beautiful card, printed in two colors. For five times its cost your local printer could not give you so neat and attractive a card.

No. 2 is our *Information Card,* to be handed out to your members, that they may keep the pastor informed as to who are sick or in trouble, or give him the name and address of any person upon whom they think it would be well for him to call. A very helpful, useful form.

No. 3 is a "Request for Prayer Card," to be used at the close of your Sunday night

evangelistic services or in revival meetings. Its value will be apparent to any pastor.

No. 4 is an *Invitation Card*, to be handed out by the pastor and members; contains a cordial invitation to all the services of the church; is printed in two colors, and will always attract attention.

No. 5 is our *Question Box Folder*. It is a four-page, oblong folder, fully described in March Current Anecdotes. The use of these Question Box slips will add much to the interest of your Sunday evening and prayer meeting services.

AND NOW THE PRICE.

By a special arrangement with the manufacturers we can send the new air cushion stamp, containing three lines, name of church, name of pastor and location of church, all that is needed on the cards, with a patent ink pad, color to correspond with the printing on our cards, for only $1.00 postpaid. The cards we furnish in any quantity at the uniform price of 50 cents per 100 postpaid. If you prefer to see samples before ordering, send 2 cent stamp. Address all orders to Pastor's Supplies Co., Washington, Ga.

A CALL TO UP-TO-DATE PASTORS.

CLERGYMAN'S CO-OPERATIVE CORRESPONDENCE CLUB.

For mutual helpfulness and exchange of printed matter and plans.

REV. ELLISON R. COOK, Secretary, Washington, Ga.

[NOTE.—Address all communications for this department to the Secretary, above address.]

Our 4 C Club.

We received quite a number of new members during April. We now have on our list some of the most successful pastors in America, and the value of membership will increase with every passing month. We renew our offer made in March and April numbers.

Send 50 cents for membership for one year and the secretary will send you postpaid a "Pastor's Pocket Directory for Systematic Visitation," prepared by Rev. Lewis O. Thompson.

Special Offer for May.

Get your April number of Current Anecdotes, turn to page 317 and read there the description of the "Travis Reference Line System of Bible Study." Now for $1.00, the special low price quoted there, I will send a complete system, the three sets of studies, and enter your name as a member of our 4 C Club paid for one year.

REV. ELLISON R. COOK,
Washington, Ga.

An Appeal from Algeria.

The following interesting appeal from a' Tizi-ouzon, Algeria, addressed to Dr. J. M. Gray, in care of the publisher, was received this month:

"I wish very ardently to possess a copy of your work, 'Synthetic Bible Studies.' Unfortunately, I am unable, at my very great regret, to purchase the precious work, at least to the regular price of $2. This being so, alas, I should be very thankful to you if can of possibility, you would have the great kindness to help me for acquiring the copy so much desired. Please and pray you excuse my importunate request and believe, as I am, Rev. Dr. Gray, your servant and brother in our Lord Jesus Christ."

Signed, Pastor C. Philit, B. D., a' Tizi-ouzon, Algeria, Africa.

Note—And if preachers in this country realized its worth they would want it as badly.

Printed Matter Received.

We still have Specimens 1 to 20. See March and April numbers.

No. 21.—Coupon Cards. These cards are the original design of Rev. F. P. Leach, Sioux City, S. D., and will interest our members.

No. 22.—Information Card (new form).

No. 23—Welcome Card (new form).

No. 24.—Children's Day Program.

No. 25.—Missionary Offering Card. One side for cash subscription is printed in black, reverse for subscription payable at stated time in future, printed in red.

No. 26—Pamphlet on Systematic Giving.

No. 27—Twentieth Century Sunday School Card System.

No. 28—Steward's S. S. Record Cards and Secretary's Book.

Send always 2 cent stamp for postage. Mail the Secretary specimens of your church printing.

Communicants' Cards.

It is difficult for a pastor to note and remember who of his members come to the Lord's table or commune. Furnish each member the week preceding the communion with a card like Specimen No. 6, (50 cents per 100 postpaid, Pastor's Supplies Co., Washington, Ga.), and have them if they commune to drop in the "Pastor's Box," the collection plate, or hand to the pastor. Any special statement concerning the communicant's spiritual condition or special request may be written on reverse side of card. Then, too, the pastor might ask those members who do not commune to write their reason for the neglect of this means of grace on card and return to him. The use of these cards will bring the pastor in closer touch with the communicants and he will learn things which will prove helpful to him in his pastoral work.

Hath any wounded thee? Soft language dresses it; forgiveness cures it; and oblivion takes away the scar.—Francis Quarles.

BANKS' SERMONS.

Vol. II. INCORPORATED WITH CURRENT ANECDOTES. No. 5.

STRONG HEARTS.

"And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you; to the end he may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God."—I Thessalonians 3: 12, 13.

Not long ago I was coming up from the South with a conductor, who told me of a recent experience he had had bringing his train over the same route one cold night. He said the engineer began to lose time and kept losing it. He complained that he could not keep up steam. The fireman worked with all his might, but gradually the fire died down on their hands, and finally died down entirely, so that it would not give steam enough to draw the train at all. There was a long delay and everybody suffered inconvenience and discomfort.

The human heart is the locomotive of life. So long as the heart keeps true and strong, with plenty of the steam of courage and hope, no man is really defeated, and everything that is good enough to be true in a human life may be possible; but when the heart faints, and the inner fires of the soul begin to die down, nothing can really help that does not start a new fire in the soul. A dead engine must go to the roundhouse, have all the ashes and clinkers taken out and a new fire built, and then it may start on a new journey with better success. The same is true of life. A clear head, a strong body, and all outward surroundings propitious are of no avail unless there be a strong brave heart, true and pure in its unselfish love for God and man.

The mightiest men and women the world has known for blessing have been those who have been mighty in the affections. They have been people with large generous hearts. Among the many stories about Queen Victoria that have filled the papers recently, nothing has seemed more delightful to me than the statement of the fact that of all the praise which has been written about her in the last score of years or more, in prose and verse, nothing ever gave her so much pleasure as a little poem which told the story of a poor old peasant woman who was made very happy because the Queen nodded to her as she drove by her humble door. The little song runs:

I'm but an auld body
  Livin' up in Deeside
In a twa-roomed bit hoosie
  Wi' a toofa' beside;
Wi' my coo an my grumphy
  I'm as happy 's a bee,
But I'm far prooder noo
  Since she noddit to me!

I'm nae sae far past wi't—
  I'm grey trig an' hale,
Can plant twa-three tawties,
  An' look after my kale;
An' when oor Queen passes
  I rin oot to see
Gin by luck she micht notice
  An' nod oot to me!

But I've aye been unlucky,
  An' the blinds were aye doon,
Till last week the time
  O' her veesit cam' roun';
I waved my bit apron
  As brisk's I could dee,
An' the Queen lauched fu' kindly,
  An' noddit to me!

My son sleeps in Egypt—
  It's nae ease to freit—
An' yet when I think o't
  I'm sair like to greet;
She may feel for my sorrow,
  She's a mither, ye see;
An' may be she kent o't
  When she noddit to me!

These quaint and simple Doric verses appeared anonymously in an obscure Scotch paper, and they came under the Queen's eye accidentally. The homely tribute to her as the mother of her people so touched her tender heart that she sought out the author and wrote him a beautiful letter of acknowledgment. And over and over again during the last weary years of her life she asked to have these little verses read to her. It was the heart of the Queen that gave her her great power over her people.

No one can make a greater mistake, so far as the happiness of life is concerned, than to be careless or indifferent about the development of the heart. To neglect to feed the heart upon the tender fellowships of life is to narrow and embitter the years that come after. Will Carleton tells the story of a young man who was sitting in the hotel office looking dreamily and drearily out of the window. The clerk, who had nothing else to do just then, came and sat down by him, to "cheer him up" a little; for it is part of a good hotel man's business to keep his guests happy and contented, so they will stay longer.

"Thinking up some new scheme to make money, I'll be bound, Roberts," he ventured, looking quizzically at the youth; "or about some new 'best girl'; or——"

"Or on what a caricature on home even a first-class hotel like this one is," interrupted the young man.

The clerk looked thoughtful. He knew by experience that the other was right.

"You see," continued the guest, "I'd give five hundred dollars to go home and spend the night. I say 'five hundred dollars' because that's all I'm worth as yet. If it was ten thousand I'd give it, all the same. And I'm wondering why it was that I didn't stay there more when I could do it for nothing. Father and mother always used to say: 'You're going to stay home tonight, aren't you?' and I'd answer: 'Oh, no! I've got to go to'—this, that or the other. And then I'd be out maybe till midnight, or later, and act a little cross at breakfast in the morning."

"But of course no one can expect a young fellow to be tied at home all through his merriest time of life," answered the clerk.

"That's what father used to say," rejoined the guest. "When mother's eyes would moisten a little because I was going out, he would say, laughingly, but I thought a little regretfully: 'We can't put old heads on young shoulders, wife.' And that was true. But the trouble is, I did not realize that my head was going to get older so soon."

"Well, you say you'd give five hundred dollars to drop in there again," ventured the hotel clerk, who began to pity the young man to a degree entirely inconsistent with the hotel's interests. "It won't cost you anywhere near that sum to go there. Why not pay 'the old folks' a visit?"

"Alas," replied the young man, "there are now no 'old folks' and no home to visit. All are gone. And hundreds of times I could have done so easily what I would now give half of my life to do just once."

Do not, I beseech you, be fitting your own heart for such sorrow in the years to come.

Christ's appeal is to our hearts. It is at the door of the heart that he knocks for admittance. Paul declares in his letter to the Ephesians that the great purpose of all religious teaching and influence is, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length, and depth and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." The peace and joy of the Christian religion has its fountain in the heart. In his letter to the Colossians Paul says, "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." Paul always understood that the center of religion was in the heart and that in the heart was the great need for Christian comfort. In his second letter to the Thessalonians he utters this sweet prayer for his friends: "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work."

Christians grow in grace and Christian strength as they open their hearts to the coming of Christ and as they give themselves in heart fellowship to loving service for him. These are always important and interesting questions to put to ourselves: Am I growing in the divine grace? Am I growing in the knowledge of Christ? Is my heart becoming stronger in righteousness and true holiness? You remember the stream which Ezekiel saw, which was at first but a small stream; but a quarter of a mile away it had grown until its waters were ankle-deep, and half a mile away the water was knee-deep. Another thousand cubits, or three-quarters of a mile from the fountain, the water was waist-deep; after going another thousand cubits, or a mile in all, the stream could no longer be forded and there were waters to swim in. There were no tributaries coming in; it was simply the swelling from the main fountain. The fountain was the sanctuary of God. Suppose you apply this picture of the prophet to your own Christian experience. How many miles are you from the fountain where you first drank of the River of the Water of Life? Are there waters to swim in, in the blessed fulness of experience which you realize, or is your Christian life more shallow now than it was half a mile from where you started? Dr. Maclaren says that Australian rivers are like some men's lives—a chain of ponds in the dry season; nay, not even a chain, but a series, with no connecting channel of water between them. That is like a great many Christian people; they have isolated times when they feel the voice of Christ's love and yield themselves to the power of the world to come, and then there are long intervals when they feel neither the one nor the other. But the prophet's vision ought to be realized by each of us. It is God's ideal which there is power in the Gospel to make real in the case of every one of us—the rapid and continuous increase in the depth and in the scour of "the River of the Water of Life" that flows through our lives. Luther used to say, "If you want to clean out a dunghill turn the Elbe into it." If you desire to have your hearts cleansed of all the foulness of sin turn the River of Life into it; but it must be always a deepening river that is growing stronger in its tide.

A purely intellectual Christianity, to which the mind accedes, but which does not enlist the heart's affections and control the motive and spirit of a man so that his temper and conversation are mastered by it, has no influence or power for Christ before the world. It is only a heart religion that rings true in the market-places of social fellowship.

Rev. James Robertson tells the story of a little girl who once received a sovereign (for it was in England) from her mother, and with it was sent to the shop to make pur-

chases. When she offered the sovereign to the shop-keeper he rang it upon the counter, and he thought there was something suspicious about it. He said to her: "This is not genuine."

"Oh, it must be; my mother has just been to the bank, where she received it from the teller, and only a few minutes ago she handed it to me."

"Well, look here." He took a good sovereign from the till and rang the two together, and proved to her that there was something wrong about it.

She went back to the bank and asked the cashier to give her another one. She said, "My mother gave me this."

"Yes," he said, "I gave her that sovereign."

"Well, the man at the shop refuses the sovereign and says that there is not the right ring about it."

"Oh, he must be mistaken." And then he got another and rung it beside it and discovered the same thing. Then with a glass he examined it narrowly, and he said: "The gold is perfectly good, but there is really a flaw in the coin, and it will have to go back to the mint again."

I think there are a good many people who are like that coin. They mean to be good and in the main their lives are moral and upright, but the ring of love, the true ring of sympathy that springs from a warm loving heart, is not there. They need to go back to the mint again. O, I beg you, do not hide your condition from yourself. Let us be honest before God. Have we the right ring? It is not, Do I mean well? Am I as good as my neighbors? Do I average up pretty well with other professed Christians? Oh, no, let us put all such folly away from us. Is my heart so overflowing with love to God and with gratitude to the Lord Jesus Christ that songs of praise constantly make melody in my heart, and I am all aglow with desire to so live before the men and women about me that I shall make them know and feel that Jesus Christ is a divine Lord and Savior? If this is not true, then let us go back to the Mint! You will find it at the mercy-seat. Yield your heart anew to God and let him stamp it all his own.

Let me call your attention to another thought, and that is, the relation between our heart's love and sympathy for others and the building up of holiness in our own hearts. Take the whole paragraph into your thought: "Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you. And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you." And now look for the reason for all this: "To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God." How could Paul say more strongly that a man can never have a strong heart in holiness before God so long as he is selfish. The unselfish soul opens the door to the pure strong heart. The first words Zacchaeus said when he stood before Christ in repentance for his sin was, "The half of my goods I give to the poor."

Dr. Webb-Peploe, the English preacher, tells of a very rich man in his parish who had been very close and niggardly with his money and had never given much for benevolence. He had a paralytic stroke, and when Dr. Peploe went to see him he said: "The Lord has stricken me; and I am afraid I may die. I have sent for you at once that I may do what I suppose is right before God; I want to go to heaven, and I want you to take a hundred pounds for the poor."

Dr. Peploe looked him straight in the face and said: "Do you think you are going to buy your soul's way to glory by a dirty hundred pounds? Give your money where you like; I will not touch it!" That was pretty strong, but it was the man's salvation. He lingered seven years, a poor, helpless invalid, but that sick-bed was God's flower-bed, and his life became generous and loving, the heart within him was broken up and became a heart of flesh, and as he poured forth his streams of benevolence his spiritual life became strong and beautiful.

There is no sweeter fragrance in the world than that which goes forth from a generous heart. At one of the meetings of the Presbyterian General Assembly an effort was made to raise funds sufficient to send a young Princeton graduate to India as a missionary. A lady present noticed a teacher of a home mission school, who was her guest, slip a gold ring from her finger and put it on the plate. She asked the giver why she did it. The teacher replied that she had no money, but that she knew what it would mean to have the effort to send the missionary fail. She had been told that she must close her own school because no funds were given to support it. But she had refused to give up her work and had secured through friends enough to continue for awhile, because she could not bear to take away from her pupils what they so much needed. And for the same reason she had given her ring, with its valued associations, to help another to do what was so dear to her.

The next morning a delegate brought the ring to the Assembly and told its story. It was worth about five dollars. "I will give five dollars to send that ring back to that young woman," said a minister. "I will give five dollars," said the stated clerk. A newspaper reporter handed up five dollars to the platform. Pastors, missionaries, visitors, came forward eagerly with their cash, each one determined to have a share in restoring the ring. In ten minutes over three hundred dollars had been passed to the desk. The heart in the little woman who gave the ring was what did it all. They caught sight of the flame of love and self-sacrifice which made her so glad to do something for Christ's sake, and it touched all their hearts. Let us so open the doors of our hearts, and pour forth our gifts of love to God and to his people, that he shall be able to make our hearts unblameable in holiness before him.

AN OLD PORTRAIT OF A CHRISTIAN.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee."—Psalm 51:10-13.

When we read a paragraph like this, written thousands of years ago, we are impressed with the fact that human nature is the same in every age, and that the great necessities of the soul are just the same now as in the days of David. David has painted here, many centuries before the coming of Jesus Christ, a portrait of the kind of transformation which must come to a sinful man before he can be useful in winning men to God. And yet if the words were put on the lips of some man in the New Testament, or if we were to hear them fresh and new as the coinage of a heart hot with its own deep experience today in our own country and among our own people, we would feel that no better description could be given of that deep and genuine heart revolution in motive and purpose and life which must transpire before a sinning man may go forth with influence and power to win men from their transgressions and convert them to the love of God in Christ Jesus. Thus we find in David's portrait of a man of God in his day one that serves perfectly as the portrait of a true Christian in our own day. Let us study some of the features of this portrait.

First, a clean heart is fundamental in the Christian life. "Keep thy heart with all diligence," said a wise man of old, "for out of it are the issues of life." Christ declares that a bad life must come from a bad heart, and that it is only from a good heart that a flowing stream of good conduct can come. A wholesome character and a pure life can only be maintained by having a clean heart behind them.

David speaks as though the making of a clean heart was the work of God. His cry is, "Create in me a clean heart, O God." That is true, and yet it is not all the truth. for God cannot create a clean heart in us unless it be also our own choice. God will not break down our will in the matter. From our inmost souls we must choose to have a clean heart. I think there are people who deceive themselves at this point. They pray to God and ask him for a clean heart, but down at the bottom of their will force they do not wish it and they do not will it. They keep right on thinking and doing things which are unclean the while they are praying God to make them clean. There is a word in the first epistle of John which makes clear the working together of man's will with God's will in the creation of a clean heart in a man who has been sinful. John says, "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth; but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." That surely makes it clear. Our walk and our prayers must match. They must run in parallel lines. If a man prays God to give him a clean heart, the meanwhile he is doing dark and shady things, his prayers will be of no avail. If we confess our sins and walk in the light—that is, to the very best of our knowledge do right—we can depend on it that Christ will keep his word and will create in us clean hearts.

The second suggestion is, "a right spirit." The spirit is all-important in a human life. Form and ceremony amount to but little, and are worth nothing in themselves; but the spirit, that is everything. You know how true that is in regard to your neighbors and business associates. No amount of politeness or social polish can take the place of a right and genuine spirit of sympathy or of genuine manliness or womanliness. So in religion, if a man is to be valuable to God and his fellows the real spirit of reverence and worship must be in him. Some English preacher says that it is the spiritual in our religion which never changes and never grows old. John Wesley in his day speaks of being wearied with the wordy strife, and cries out, "To thee, the Way, the Truth, the Life, at last I turn." And it is interesting to note that while the great theological discussions of that time have fought their battle out, and have now no interest whatever to the great multitudes of the world, the spiritual hymns that were aroused and breathed forth in that period live on in all the graces of youth because they breathe the living spirit of the Christian faith. Toplady was a great theological debater. Nobody knows or cares anything about that today; but the whole world sings his great hymn, "Rock of Ages cleft for me," with reverent heart and dewy eye. Who cares about the old bitter theological discussion connected with the Oxford movement? But men of every shade of denominational life join with tender heart and sympathetic voice in singing Keble's hymn, "Sun of my soul, thou Savior dear," and Cardinal Newman's inspired song, "Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom." As the years have gone on change and decay have fallen on most of the things of that time, but still we sing, and pray as we sing, "O, thou who changest not, abide with me."

I do not wish to disparage beautiful churches or beautiful religious forms, but the tendency of humanity to yield to worldliness and let the vital life be displaced by form and ceremony, makes it very important that we shall constantly lay the emphasis in our own feeling upon the supreme importance of a right spirit in all our work. I very much prefer a beautiful church with all its modern accessories to the old log cabin in which I began my ministry; and all other things being equal, I would rather worship God in a beau-

tiful church than in one of those rude log huts; but if the service in the church is cold and formal and without the spirit of loving consecration and self-sacrifice, I would a thousand times rather worship in the log cabin with men and women whose hearts breathe the spirit of supreme devotion to the Heavenly Father. As one has said, a marble cistern exquisitely carved may be very pleasing to the eye, but if it contain only stagnant, dirty water, I would rather go down on my knees and drink of the brook that gushes from the mountain side. It is the spirit that gives the measure of life.

A consciousness of God's presence is another important feature of a true life. David says, "Cast me not away from thy presence." He knew that he would have no power if he felt the loneliness of an exile. Only as he walked in the presence of God, and felt that God was with him, would he be powerful for service. I wonder if there are any of us here trying to serve God and influence others for righteousness, who yet are without God and with no sense of God's nearness and presence to our own hearts. If so, let there be a mighty turning unto God this hour. We can do nothing alone. We must have the inspiration and uplift of feeling that comes from the assurance that God is with us and that we are working together with him.

Another phase of this same feature of the portrait is the necessity of the Holy Spirit. "Take not thy holy spirit from me." It is the Spirit of the living God that can make powerful what would otherwise be only weak and useless talent in our hands. Dr. Meyer says that one day while out walking he came on a saw-pit where a man was hard at work with the upper handle of a long saw which he was raising and lowering. Meyer knew that, though he could not see him, there was another man in the bottom of the pit, the motions of whose body corresponded exactly with those of the man on the surface. The two were co-operating to the same end, and that saw was moving slowly through the heavy beam of timber by the united energy of the man he could see and the one he could not see. The co-operation between these two men is like the co-operation between the sincere Christian, seeking to win men to God, and the Holy Spirit, and it is the heart and soul of all successful service to God and man. The sawyer at the top of the pit is an emblem of the Christian minister whose heart is given up to his purpose; or of the earnest Sunday school teacher who takes seriously the divine privilege which is his; it is an emblem of the Christian mother who holds herself as God's steward over her children, or the Christian business man who feels that the men in his employ are immortal souls for whom we must give an account. But at the other end of this enginery of influence and power, hidden out of sight but always there, is the Holy Spirit, working with every man or woman who with devout purpose is seeking to bring men to God.

There is another interesting characteristic in this portrait, and that is the joy which lights it up. "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." What is the chief characteristic of the joy of salvation? There is no joy so deep and so precious, and yet it is a joy with an element of earnest responsibility in it. Paul suggests its character in that sentence in the second letter to the Corinthians, when he is speaking about the light afflictions that are only temporary but shall result in "an eternal weight of glory." Dr. Matheson, the blind preacher of Edinboro, has a very beautiful thought, and one full of teaching, on this point. He says that the transit from earth to heaven is not an emancipation from care; it is an emancipation from care about ourselves. A man loses all his remorse, all his weight of guilt, all his burden of fear of punishment; the Lord takes all that away when he forgives us. He sets us free from it all. But he gives us in its place a "weight of glory." He empties us that we may be filled again with a higher care, love's care. There is a weight which is only felt in heaven, and which is heaven's glory—it is the labor of love. And so the Lord when he forgives our sin restores unto us the joy of salvation. He not only gives us the joy of realizing that it is our privilege to have fellowship with Jesus Christ in saving others. The joy of salvation is never the joy of ease or self-indulgence. It is the joy of self-sacrifice; it is the joy of exertion; it is the joy of taking upon your shoulder another's burden; it is the joy of throwing the life-line to a man who is drowning; it is the joy that thrills through a man's soul when he feels that but for him some one would perish, but that through his help a man or a woman or a child has been redeemed. Oh, it is a glorious joy, but it is a joy that the self-indulgent, the worldly, the shirk, never can know, and nothing will ever come within the reach of these to compare with the deep and blessed joy known to those who experience "the joy of salvation."

O, brothers and sisters, I covet for each one of us that joy. As Matheson says, "The joy of thy Lord is not a bird song; it is a heart's enlargement. The risen Christ remains not in the garden; he must ascend to the cares of his Father. The place prepared for thee is no scene of luxurious ease, no plot of ground enclosed from mortal pain. There is a gate leading into the highways and the hedges, opening out into the far country of the prodigal son. And through this gate thy Father would have thee go—to minister, to succor, to save. This is the place prepared for thee in the mansions of thy Father. This is the ivory gate and golden, where the angels go out and in. This is the narrow way which leadeth unto light; and they who have found that life retrace the road to bring their brother in. Thy weight of responsibility will be thy weight of glory."

If we have all these characteristics we shall know what David meant when he said "Uphold me with thy free spirit," or as the New Version puts it, "Uphold me with a free spirit." The consciousness of being right in God's sight, a keen sense of the presence of God, an assurance that we are working together with the Holy Spirit,

and the glow of service inspired and cheered by the joy of salvation will help us to go forth in a free spirit. We shall have the freedom of the saints. All the handicaps will be taken away; every weight and sin that besets a man is thrown aside, and he runs steadfastly in the race that is set before him. Many Christians lack freedom because they are going clogged and yoked and weighted down with a hundred burdens that ought to be thrown away. "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith."

What is the result of such a life? Two results are suggested. First, transgressors shall see God in us—"Then will I teach transgressors thy ways." We shall not have to invite them to a formal school in order to do it, either. They will feel the presence of God in our conversation, in our treatment of others, and in all the spirit of our daily life. When I was a boy at home, if I fell into any sin, nothing convicted me so much as the pure, sincere Christian life of my father and mother. It was their lives more than anything else that taught the boyish transgressor the ways of God. A man said to me not a great while ago, "The thing that brought me to Christ was the Christian conduct of my employer. I watched him narrowly, and he never swerved from the right. I saw opportunities where by swerving from strict righteousness he might greatly increase his profits, but he never faltered for a moment. After awhile it came to have a great fascination for me; there was something so powerful in it that it constantly convicted me of sin. I saw God's way in him."

And, finally, sinners shall be converted unto God. The religion that does not make converts is of no avail. A selfish Christianity is a misnomer. Christ does not tell us to shine our light, but we are to have so much of the light in us that when we go forth among men the light will pour out upon the darkness and dispel it. Brothers and sisters, I feel very profoundly that something is wrong with us, or there would be more people converted to Christ in this place. Too many people are coming into our Sunday-school classes, remaining Sabbath after Sabbath, for months, and going away without having seen the Lord. Too many people come into this house Sunday after Sunday, hearing the message from the pulpit, and yet going away without being saved. Too many people live in our homes with us, work with us in the office and the store, without being convicted of sin by the purity and the singleness of devotion to God expressed in our characters and in our conduct. May God save us from being stumbling blocks and barriers that shall keep men from the kingdom rather than lead them into it! What is the trouble with us? May God help us to search our hearts! Is there uncleanness in our hearts? Have impure thoughts and imaginations nested and brought forth their young there? If so, may God help us this day, at the mercy-seat and in the secret closet, to open our hearts to the cleansing power of Jesus' blood. Are we working alone? Have we received the Holy Ghost since we believed? Or is the whole thought of the Holy Spirit vague and unreal to us? If this be true, I pray you go no longer exiled and alone to try to do a work too great for you unaided, but here and now, while I preach, repent of your sins and open your hearts as Cornelius and his household did under the sermon of Peter, and receive the Holy Ghost. May Charles Wesley's soul-inspiring hymn be the prayer of every heart:

"Jesus, thine all-victorious love
Shed in my heart abroad:
Then shall my feet no longer rove,
Rooted and fixed in God.

O that in me the sacred fire
Might now begin to glow,
Burn up the dross of base desire
And make the mountains flow!

O that it now from heaven might fall,
And all my sins consume!
Come, Holy Ghost, for thee I call;
Spirit of burning, come!

Refining fire, go through my heart;
Illuminate my soul;
Scatter thy life through every part,
And sanctify the whole.

My steadfast soul, from falling free,
Shall then no longer move,
While Christ is all the world to me,
And all my heart is love."

THREE MEN WHOM JESUS CALLED.

"And it came to pass that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him: Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."—Luke 9: 57-62.

Here are three men whom Jesus called to be his disciples whose conversation with the Savior at that interesting time ought to have a great message for us. The first man responds with a quick outburst of enthusiasm. At once, without any parleying, he says, "I will follow thee withersoever thou goest." Christ evidently saw that though the man's answer did him honor, and that he was entirely sincere, he did not fully appreciate the earnestness and

seriousness of the undertaking to which he consented. To follow Jesus then was not—nor is it now—a holiday excursion. Christ wished this man to understand very clearly at the start the full meaning of the declaration that he would share with Jesus his fate. He at once points out to the man that to do this will no doubt mean the loss of a great many things to which he has been accustomed, and will necessitate much self-denial. Jesus calls attention to the fact that he is the most homeless of men on the earth; he points upward to a little branch where a bird has built her nest, and he says, "Even the birds of the air have nests"; he stretches his hand across toward a fox that is running for his hole on the side of the hill, and says, "Even the foxes have holes where they may hide when pursued by the hunter, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." We are sure that Jesus did not mean to drive this man away from his desire to become his disciple, but he did not want him to start out with a wrong idea, or from wrong motives. If he became his disciple then he must share the sorrows as well as the joys, the persecution as well as the praise, of his master and Lord.

I think we need this message this morning. I am sure that modern Christianity needs to hear it with increased emphasis. Are there not many who are glad to shelter themselves under the name of Jesus for the sake of the respectability, the social and moral standing it implies, who are unwilling to share with Christ when to do so means to bear the brunt of a popular opinion in the town or the country, which is wrong and wicked. Remember that Christ never calls right wrong, or wrong right, because the wrong happens to be in the majority and the right is crushed to the wall. Show me anywhere in the world a cause which stands for goodness and righteousness against a majority however great, where to defend the right means to be abused and slandered and cast down, and I will show you there the Man of Nazareth with the thorn-pierced brow and the nail-wounded palm. Your compromising, self-careful men and women, who wear the name of Jesus as a badge of honor when it is popular, and pull on an overcoat of compromise and cowardice to hide the badge when to show it means loss of votes or a loss of business or loss of praise, need to hear the heart-searching words of Jesus, "The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." You say at the communion altar, "Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." Do you mean by that that you will follow Jesus and his standards of righteousness when to do so means to run straight against the high priests in business and politics and society in your circle? If you do not, then what folly is your declaration to your Lord! O, may God make us true! Give us three hundred men and women in Cleveland, in any church, who are like Gideon's band of three hundred, utterly unselfish, ready to go thirsty themselves that the cause of God and righteousness may triumph, and there will be such an upheaval for righteousness, such a spreading abroad of Christian influence and power, that the whole world shall take note of it. Brothers and sisters, it is not only more Christians that we need, but a better quality of Christians. We need more loyalty to Jesus Christ. We need a readier spirit of self-sacrifice, a more abounding emotion of love to the Savior, a fidelity that will not waver. We need men and women who love the church of Jesus Christ with such intensity that it is the first and foremost thing in their lives, and everything else takes a back seat and second place; to whom Christ is more than business, more than politics, more than society. O, my friends, we are called to be that kind of Christians and God help us if we are failing to meet the demand!

The second man presents to us another phase of the same message. When Christ appealed to him to follow him as his disciple he expressed his willingness to do so, but said, "Suffer me first to go and bury my father." Jesus said unto him, "Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." At first glance, probably, you are shocked at this answer of Christ, and you are ready to say, "This is harsh and unfeeling and unnatural." But you must take into consideration that Jesus knew what was in man, and he knew that if this man went back to his father's house, and to the long mourning ceremonies which were to follow, he would be again entangled with worldly things, and a man who might be very valuable in the furtherance of the Gospel would be altogether lost. Christ saw that the man, while expressing his willingness to follow him, did not really surrender his will to him, and did not look upon following Christ as the first and supreme thing in his life. That "suffer me first" suggests the self-will which was behind the request. Christ will be first or nothing in your life and mine. Religion is a place where a man cannot carry water on both shoulders. All life's blessings will be spilled in the attempt. It was as if Christ was saying to this man, "Your father is dead, your going back can be of no value to him now, but multitudes of other men are dying in their sins and others are undergoing a living death because of the darkness and iniquity in which they exist. Let the dead bury their dead, and you come and follow me, and get your heart on fire with the message of eternal life, that you may carry hope and mercy to the living."

Then here is this third man: "And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home in my house." And Jesus said unto him, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Again that thought of harshness comes back at these words, and you are ready to say, "Surely there could be no harm in the man's going to bid his father and mother farewell; and not only would it be no harm but it would be right and proper." Perhaps you recall the story of how Elijah called Elisha to fit himself to be a man of God. You remember that when Elijah came striding across the field where the young Elisha was ploughing with his oxen, he threw his prophet's mantle over the young man's shoulders and walked away as if to leave him. The young fellow knew at once that that was God's call, and he

ran after Elijah and said, "Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee." And Elijah, stern man though he was, gave his consent. Why should Christ, whose whole character was dominated by tenderness and sympathy, have acted in so different a manner? I think we may find the explanation in this fact, that the father and mother of Elisha were evidently godly people, who would feel that their son could not be honored in any other way so much as to be a prophet of the most high God. Elisha would only get encouragement and blessing from his parents. For him to go back home under those circumstances would be only to strengthen him in his great purpose. But Jesus is talking to a man, no doubt, whose home friends would be bitterly opposed to his going away on what they would call "a fool's chase." And Christ saw that deep down in this man's heart there was a lack of decision; he wanted to take one backward look before he leaped into a thorough espousal of the Christian life. It was as if he said, "Yes, Lord, I am much taken with you, and I intend to follow you, but let me go home and think it over; let me talk with my old friends about it, and see what they say." Christ saw it was now or never with this man. If he went back among his old associates and talked it over with them, they would all be opposed to his following Christ, and he would have odds of ten to one against him. And so Jesus said, If you go back you are lost; choose now what you are going to do. You must decide it forever. You have been listening to my talk, and have been interested in my message; you have put your hand to the plough, and if you go back now, undecided, you will prove yourself to be unworthy of the kingdom.

I am sure that there are many who hear me now who need this great message just as certainly as did this man to whom Jesus was speaking. It is religious indecision which threatens to be your ruin. You know enough of righteousness to be saved, and you have many good impulses about it, and many earnest longings for the Christian life; and yet there is great danger that you will be eternally lost through the lack of earnest, resolute decision of character. You need the support which would come from a complete committal of yourself to Christ. When Garibaldi sailed from Genoa, in 1860, to deliver Sicily from its oppressors, he took with him only a thousand volunteers. They landed at Marsala, almost in the face of the Neapolitan fleet. When the commander of Marsala, returning to the port, saw the steamers on which Garibaldi and his soldiers had come, he gave immediate orders to destroy them. Garibaldi, having landed his men, looked with indifference, almost with pleasure, upon their destruction. "Our retreat is cut off," he said, exultingly, to his soldiers. "We have no hope but in going forward; it is death or victory." They went forward to great and glorious victory because every man was shut up to being a hero; every man was like ten men, because there was no chance to go back; they could only go on. O, man, wavering and undecided, convicted of sin, and yet half hugging your chains, turn your face to the front and march openly into the ranks of the soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ. So long as a man dallies with a decision, retreat and failure is ever possible to him.

Among the prisoners taken captive early in the battle at Waterloo there was a Highland piper. Napoleon, struck with his mountain dress and sinewy limbs, asked him to play on his instrument, which seems a part of nature itself in the mountains and glens of Scotland. "Play a pibroch," said Napoleon; and the Highlander played. "Play a march." It was done. "Play a retreat." "Na, na," said the Highlander, proudly, "I never learned to play a retreat." So Christ is calling for soldiers who do not know how to play a retreat, but who have given their whole hearts and souls up to him and to his service.

I call you to this noble discipleship. Be no longer wavering like a wave of the sea. "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." Arouse all that is noble and brave and courageous in you to choose that which is noblest and best in human life. You have been taking backward looks too long. Look forward, look upward. Only Christ can save you. Only the Christian life is worth living. Let your life pass without Christ, without the noble ambitions and the lofty fellowships and the glorious hopes that come with him, and whatever else you may do, your life will be an empty and a miserable failure. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness," and all other things that are worth having will be added unto you. Honor Christ your Savior, and honor yourself, by making Christ the first Lord of your life.

THE LITTLE CRUSADERS	This book deals with one of the most interesting and peculiar episodes of the middle ages, viz., the marches and counter marches of the Little Crusaders. Daintily produced. Cloth, 12mo. ONE DOLLAR.	BY ISABEL SCOTT STONE

May be ordered through any bookseller or will be sent postpaid for the price by The Abbey Press, Publishers, of One Hundred and Fourteen Fifth Avenue, New York, London, Montreal, and elsewhere, who always issue interesting works.